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LETTERS, Vol. I.

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An early remittance of subscription for second year will much oblige.

GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH,
October 1872.

THE WORKS

AURELIUS AUGUSTINE,

BISHOP OF HIPPO.

A NEW TRANSLATION.

Edited by the

REV. MARCUS DODS, M.A.

VOL. VI.

THE LETTERS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE.

VOLUME I.

EDINBURGH:
T. & T. CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.
MDCCCLXXII.

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LETTERS

OF

SAINT AUGUSTINE,

BISHOP OF HIPPO.

67795

Translated by

THE REV. J. G. CUNNINGHAM, M.A.

EDINBURGH:
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PREFACE.

THE importance of the letters of eminent men, as illustrations of their life, character, and times, is too well understood to need remark. The Letters of Cicero and Pliny have given us a more vivid conception of Roman life than the most careful history could have given; the Letters of Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin furnish us with the most trustworthy material for understanding the rapid movement and fierce conflict of their age; when we read the voluminous correspondence of Pope and his compeers, or the unstudied beauties of Cowper's letters of friendship, we seem to be in the company of living men; and modern history has in nothing more distinctly proved its sagacity, than by its diligence in publishing the Letters of Cromwell, of Washington, of Chatham, and of other historical personages.

For biography, familiar letters are the most important material. In a man's published writings we see the general character of his mind, and we ascertain his opinions in so far as he deemed it safe or advisable to lay these before a perhaps unsympathizing public; in his letters he reveals his whole character, his feelings as well as his judgments, his motives, his personal history, and the various ramifications of his interest. In his familiar correspondence we see the man as he is known to his intimate friends, in his times of relaxation and unstudied utterance.[1] Few men, in writing for the

[1] "Ut oculi aliis corporis sensibus præstant, ita illustrium virorum Epistolæ cæteris eorum scriptis passim antecellunt."—Benedictine Preface to the *Ep. Aug.*

public, can resist the tendency towards a constrained attitudinizing, or throw off the fixed expression of one sitting for his portrait; and it is only in conversation, spoken or written, that we get the whole man revealed in a series of constantly varying and unconstrained expressions. And even where, as in Augustine's case, we have an autobiography, we derive from the letters many additional traits of character, much valuable illustration of opinions and progress.[1]

In their function of appendices to history they are equally valuable. It was a characteristic remark of Horace Walpole's, that "nothing gives so just an idea of an age as genuine letters; nay, history waits for its last seal from them." A still greater authority, Bacon, in his marvellous distribution of all knowledge, gives to letters the highest place among the "Appendices to History." "Letters," he says, "are, according to all the variety of occasions, advertisements, advices, directions, propositions, petitions commendatory, expostulatory, satisfactory; of compliment, of pleasure, of discourse, and all other passages of action. And such as are written from wise men are, of all the words of man, in my judgment, the best; for they are more natural than orations and public speeches, and more advised than conferences or present speeches. So, again, letters of affairs from such as manage them, or are privy to them, are of all others the best instructions for history, and to a diligent reader the best histories in themselves."[2] This is especially true of the Letters of Augustine. A large number of them are ecclesiastical and theological, and would in our day have appeared as pamphlets, or would have been delivered as lectures. There are none of his writings which do not

[1] "Si, dans le vaste naufrage des temps, par un malheur que la Providence n'a pas permis, les ouvrages proprement dits de Saint Augustin eussent peri et qu'il ne fût resté que ses lettres, nous aurions encore toute sa doctrine, tout son genie : les *Lettres de Saint Augustin*, c'est tout Saint Augustin."—Poujoulat, *Lettres de S. Aug.* vii.

[2] *Advancement of Learning*, p. 125.

receive some supplementary light from his letters. The subjects of his more elaborate writings are here handled in an easier manner; and their sources, motives, and origin are disclosed. Difficulties which his published works had occasioned are here removed, new illustrations are noted, further developments and fresh complications of heresy are alluded to, and the whole theological movement of the time is here reflected in a vivid and interesting shape. No controversy of his age was settled without his voice, and it is in his letters we chiefly see the vastness of his empire, the variety of subjects on which appeal was made to him, and the deference with which his judgment was received. Inquiring philosophers, puzzled statesmen, angry heretics, pious ladies, all found their way to the Bishop of Hippo. And while he continually complains of want of leisure, of the multifarious business of his episcopate, of the unwarranted demands made upon him, he yet carefully answers all. Sometimes he writes with the courier who is to carry his letter impatiently chafing outside the door; sometimes a promptly written reply is carried round the whole known world by some faithless messenger before it reaches his anxious correspondent; but, amidst difficulties unthought of under a postal system, his indefatigable diligence succeeds in diffusing intelligence and counsel to the most distant inquirers.

In the present volume we have, as usual, followed the Benedictine edition. Among the many labours which the Benedictine Fathers encountered in editing the works of Augustine, they undertook the onerous task of rearranging the Epistles in chronological order. The manner in which this task has been executed is eminently characteristic of their unostentatious patience and skill. Their order has been universally adopted; it is to this order that reference is made when any writer cites a letter of Augustine's; and therefore it matters less whether in each case the date assigned by the

Benedictine editors can be accepted as accurate. It will be seen that we have not considered it desirable to translate all the letters. Of those addressed to Augustine we have omitted a few which were neither important in themselves nor indispensable for the understanding of his replies; and, when any of his own letters is a mere repetition of what he has previously written to another correspondent, we have contented ourselves, and, we hope, shall satisfy our readers, with a reference to the former letter in which the arguments and illustrations now repeated may be found.

No English translation of these Letters has previously appeared. The French have in this, as in other patristic studies, been before us. Two hundred years ago a translation into the French tongue was published, and this has lately been superseded by M. Poujoulat's four readable and fairly accurate volumes.

THE EDITOR.

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LETTERS OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

LETTER I.

(A.D. 386.)

TO HERMOGENIANUS[1] AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. I WOULD not presume, even in playful discussion, to attack the philosophers of the Academy; for when could the authority of such eminent men fail to move me, did I not believe their views to be widely different from those commonly ascribed to them? Instead of confuting them, which is beyond my power, I have rather imitated them to the best of my ability. For it seems to me to have been suitable enough to the times in which they flourished, that whatever issued pure from the fountainhead of Platonic philosophy should be rather conducted into dark and thorny thickets for the refreshment of a very few *men*, than left to flow in open meadow-land, where it would be impossible to keep it clear and pure from the inroads of the vulgar herd. I use the word herd advisedly; for what is more brutish than the opinion that the soul is material? For defence against the men who held this, it appears to me that such an art and method of concealing the truth[2] was wisely contrived by the New Academy. But in this age of ours, when we see none who are philosophers,—for I do not consider those who merely wear the cloak of a philosopher to be worthy of that

[1] Hermogenianus was one of the earliest and most intimate friends of Augustine, and his associate in literary and philosophical studies.

[2] We follow the reading "tegendi veri."

venerable name,—it seems to me that men (those, at least, whom the teaching of the Academicians has, through the subtlety of the terms in which it was expressed, deterred from attempting to understand its actual meaning) should be brought back to the hope of discovering the truth, lest that which was then for the time useful in eradicating obstinate error, should begin now to hinder the casting in of the seeds of true knowledge.

2. In that age the studies of contending schools of philosophers were pursued with such ardour, that the one thing to be feared was the possibility of error being approved. For every one who had been driven by the arguments of the sceptical philosophers from a position which he had supposed to be impregnable, set himself to seek some other in its stead, with a perseverance and caution corresponding to the greater industry which was characteristic of the men of that time, and the strength of the persuasion then prevailing, that truth, though deep and hard to be deciphered, does lie hidden in the nature of things and of the human mind. Now, however, such is the indisposition to strenuous exertion, and the indifference to the liberal arts, that so soon as it is noised abroad that, in the opinion of the most acute philosophers, truth is unattainable, men send their minds to sleep, and cover them up for ever. For they presume not, forsooth, to imagine themselves to be so superior in discernment to those great men, that they shall find out what, during his singularly long life, Carneades, with all his diligence, talents, and leisure, besides his extensive and varied learning, failed to discover. And if, contending somewhat against indolence, they rouse themselves so far as to read those books in which it is, as it were, proved that the perception of truth is denied to man, they relapse into lethargy so profound, that not even by the heavenly trumpet can they be aroused.

3. Wherefore, although I accept with the greatest pleasure your candid estimate of my brief treatise, and esteem you so much as to rely not less on the sagacity of your judgment than on the sincerity of your friendship, I beg you to give more particular attention to one point, and to write me again concerning it,—namely, whether you approve of that which, in

the end of the third book,[1] I have given as my opinion, in a tone perhaps of hesitation rather than of certainty, but in statements, as I think, more likely to be found useful than to be rejected as incredible. But whatever be the value of those treatises [the books against the Academicians], what I most rejoice in is, not that I have vanquished the Academicians, as you express it (using the language rather of friendly partiality than of truth), but that I have broken and cast away from me the odious bonds by which I was kept back from the nourishing breasts of philosophy, through despair of attaining that truth which is the food of the soul.

LETTER II.

(A.D. 386.)

TO ZENOBIUS[2] AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. WE are, I suppose, both agreed in maintaining that all things with which our bodily senses acquaint us are incapable of abiding unchanged for a single moment, but, on the contrary, are moving and in perpetual transition, and have no present reality, that is, to use the language of Latin philosophy, do not exist.[3] Accordingly, the true and divine philosophy admonishes us to check and subdue the love of these things as most dangerous and disastrous, in order that the mind, even while using this body, may be wholly occupied and warmly interested in those things which are ever the same, and which owe their attractive power to no transient charm. Although this is all true, and although my mind, without the aid of the senses, sees you as you really are, and as an object which may be loved without disquietude, nevertheless I must own that when you are absent in body, and separated by distance, the pleasure of meeting and seeing you is one which I miss, and which, therefore, while it is attain-

[1] Augustine's work, *De Academicis*, b. iii. c. 20.

[2] Zenobius was the friend to whom Augustine dedicated his books *De Ordine*. In book i. ch. 1 and 2, we have a delightful description of the character of Zenobius.

[3] Ut latiné loquar, non esse.

able, I earnestly covet. This my infirmity (for such it must be) is one which, if I know you aright, you are well pleased to find in me; and though you wish every good thing for your best and most loved friends, you rather fear than desire that they should be cured of this infirmity. If, however, your soul has attained to such strength that you are able both to discern this snare, and to smile at those who are caught therein, truly you are great, and different from what I am. For my part, as long as I regret the absence of any one from me, so long do I wish him to regret my absence. At the same time, I watch and strive to set my love as little as possible on anything which can be separated from me against my will. Regarding this as my duty, I remind you, in the meantime, whatever be your frame of mind, that the discussion which I have begun with you must be finished, if we care for each other. For I can by no means consent to its being finished with Alypius, even if he wished it. But he does not wish this; for he is not the man to join with me now in endeavouring, by as many letters as we could send, to detain you with us, when you decline this, under the pressure of some necessity to us unknown.

LETTER III.

(A.D. 387.)

TO NEBRIDIUS[1] AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. WHETHER I am to regard it as the effect of what I may call your flattering language, or whether the thing be really so, is a point which I am unable to decide. For the impression was sudden, and I am not yet resolved how far it deserves to be believed. You wonder what this can be. What do you think? You have almost made me believe, not indeed that I am happy—for that is the heritage of the wise alone—but that I am at least in a sense happy: as we apply the designation *man* to beings who deserve the name only in a sense if compared with Plato's ideal man, or speak of things

[1] The character of Nebridius, and the intimacy of friendship between him and Augustine, may be seen in the *Confessions*, b. ix. c. 3.

which we see as *round* or *square*, although they differ widely from the perfect figure which is discerned by the mind of a few. I read your letter beside my lamp after supper: immediately after which I lay down, but not at once to sleep; for on my bed I meditated long, and talked thus with myself—Augustine addressing and answering Augustine: "Is it not true, as Nebridius affirms, that I am happy?" "Absolutely true it cannot be, for that I am still far from wise he himself would not deny." "But may not a happy life be the lot even of those who are not wise?" "That is scarcely possible; because, in that case, lack of wisdom would be a small misfortune, and not, as it actually is, the one and only source of unhappiness." "How, then, did Nebridius come to esteem me happy? Was it that, after reading these little books of mine, he ventured to pronounce me wise? Surely the vehemence of joy could not make him so rash, especially seeing that he is a man to whose judgment I well know so much weight is to be attached. I have it now: he wrote what he thought would be most gratifying to me, because he had been gratified by what I had written in those treatises; and he wrote in a joyful mood, without accurately weighing the sentiments entrusted to his joyous pen. What, then, would he have said if he had read my *Soliloquies?* He would have rejoiced with much more exultation, and yet could find no loftier name to bestow on me than this which he has already given in calling me happy. All at once, then, he has lavished on me the highest possible name, and has not reserved a single word to add to my praises, if at any time he were made by me more joyful than he is now. See what joy does."

2. But where is that truly happy life? where? ay, where? Oh! if it were attained, one would spurn the atomic theory of Epicurus. Oh! if it were attained, one would know that there is nothing here below but the visible world. Oh! if it were attained, one would know that in the rotation of a globe on its axis, the motion of points near the poles is less rapid than of those which lie half way between them,—and other such like things which we likewise know. But now, how or in what sense can I be called happy, who know not why the world is such in size as it is, when the proportions

of the figures according to which it is framed do in no way hinder its being enlarged to any extent desired? Or how might it not be said to me—nay, might we not be compelled to admit that matter is infinitely divisible; so that, starting from any given base (so to speak), a definite number of corpuscles must rise to a definite and ascertainable quantity? Wherefore, seeing that we do not admit that any particle is so small as to be insusceptible of further diminution, what compels us to admit that any assemblage of parts is so great that it cannot possibly be increased? Is there perchance some important truth in what I once suggested confidentially to Alypius, that since number, as cognisable by the understanding, is susceptible of infinite augmentation, but not of infinite diminution,[1] because we cannot reduce it lower than to the units, number, as cognisable by the senses (and this, of course, just means quantity of material parts or bodies), is on the contrary susceptible of infinite diminution, but has a limit to its augmentation? This may perhaps be the reason why philosophers justly pronounce riches to be found in the things about which the understanding is exercised, and poverty in those things with which the senses have to do. For what is poorer than to be susceptible of endless diminution? and what more truly rich than to increase as much as you will, to go whither you will, to return when you will and as far as you will, and to have as the object of your love that which is large and cannot be made less? For whoever understands these numbers loves nothing so much as the unit; and no wonder, seeing that it is through it that all the other numbers can be loved by him. But to return: Why is the world the size that it is, seeing that it might have been greater or less? I do not know: its dimensions are what they are, and I can go no further. Again: Why is the world in the place it now occupies rather than in another? Here,

[1] Had Augustine been acquainted with the decimal notation, he would not have made this remark to Alypius; for in the decimal scale, when the point is inserted, fractional parts go on diminishing according to the number of cyphers between them and the point (*e.g.* ·001), precisely as the integers increase according to the number of cyphers between them and the decimal point (*e.g.* 100·),—there being no limit to the descending series on the right hand of the decimal point, any more than to the ascending series on the left hand of the same point.

too, it is better not to put the question; for whatever the answer might be, other questions would still remain. This one thing greatly perplexed me, that bodies could be infinitely subdivided. To this perhaps an answer has been given, by setting over against it the converse property of abstract number [viz. its susceptibility of infinite multiplication].

3. But stay: let us see what is that indefinable object[1] which is suggested to the mind. This world with which our senses acquaint us is surely the image of some world which the understanding apprehends. Now it is a strange phenomenon which we observe in the images which mirrors reflect to us,—that however great the mirrors be, they do not make the images larger than the objects placed before them, be they ever so small; but in small mirrors, such as the pupil of the eye, although a large surface be placed over against them, a very small image is formed, proportioned to the size of the mirror.[2] Therefore if the mirrors be reduced in size, the images reflected in them are also reduced; but it is not possible for the images to be enlarged by enlarging the mirrors. Surely there is in this something which might reward further investigation; but meanwhile, I must sleep.[3] Moreover, if I seem to Nebridius to be happy, it is not because I seek, but because perchance I have found something. What, then, is that something? Is it that chain of reasoning which I am wont so to caress as if it were my sole treasure, and in which perhaps I take too much delight?

4. "Of what parts do we consist?" "Of soul and body." "Which of these is the nobler?" "Doubtless the soul." "What do men praise in the body?" "Nothing that I see but comeliness." "And what is comeliness of body?" "Harmony of parts in the form, together with a certain agreeableness of colour." "Is this comeliness better where it is true or where it is illusive?" "Unquestionably it is better where it is true." "And where is it found true?" "In the soul." "The soul,

[1] Nescio quid.

[2] Augustine's acquaintance with the first principles of optics, and with the properties of reflection possessed by convex, plane, and concave mirrors, must have been lamentably limited.

[3] Wisely resolved.

therefore, is to be loved more than the body; but in what part of the soul does this truth reside?" "In the mind and understanding." "With what has the understanding to contend?" "With the senses." "Must we then resist the senses with all our might?" "Certainly." "What, then, if the things with which the senses acquaint us give us pleasure?" "We must prevent them from doing so." "How?" "By acquiring the habit of doing without them, and desiring better things." "But if the soul die, what then?" "Why, then truth dies, or intelligence is not truth, or intelligence is not a part of the soul, or that which has some part immortal is liable to die: conclusions all of which I demonstrated long ago in my *Soliloquies* to be absurd because impossible; and I am firmly persuaded that this is the case, but somehow through the influence of custom in the experience of evils we are terrified, and hesitate. But even granting, finally, that the soul dies, which I do not see to be in any way possible, it remains nevertheless true that a happy life does not consist in the evanescent joy which sensible objects can yield: this I have pondered deliberately, and proved."

Perhaps it is on account of reasonings such as these that I have been judged by my own Nebridius to be, if not absolutely happy, at least in a sense happy. Let me also judge myself to be happy: for what do I lose thereby, or why should I grudge to think well of my own estate? Thus I talked with myself, then prayed according to my custom, and fell asleep.

5. These things I have thought good to write to you. For it gratifies me that you should thank me when I write freely to you whatever crosses my mind; and to whom can I more willingly write nonsense[1] than to one whom I cannot displease? But if it depends upon fortune whether one man love another or not, look to it, I pray you, how can I be justly called happy when I am so elated with joy by fortune's favours, and avowedly desire that my store of such good things may be largely increased? For those who are most truly wise, and whom alone it is right to pronounce happy, have maintained that fortune's favours ought not to be the objects of either fear or desire.

[1] Ineptiam.

Now here I used the word "cupi:"[1] will you tell me whether it should be "cupi" or "cupiri?" And I am glad this has come in the way, for I wish you to instruct me in the inflexion of this verb "cupio," since, when I compare similar verbs with it, my uncertainty as to the proper inflexion increases. For "cupio" is like "fugio," "sapio," "jacio," "capio;" but whether the infinitive mood is "fugiri" or "fugi," "sapiri" or "sapi," I do not know. I might regard "jaci" and "capi"[2] as parallel instances answering my question as to the others, were I not afraid lest some grammarian should "catch" and "throw" me like a ball in sport wherever he pleased, by reminding me that the form of the supines "jactum" and "captum" is different from that found in the other verbs "fugitum," "cupitum," and "sapitum." As to these three words, moreover, I am likewise ignorant whether the penultimate is to be pronounced long and with circumflex accent, or without accent and short. I would like to provoke you to write a reasonably long letter. I beg you to let me have what it will take some time to read. For it is far beyond my power to express the pleasure which I find in reading what you write.

LETTER IV.

(A.D. 387.)

TO NEBRIDIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. IT is very wonderful how completely I was taken by surprise, when, on searching to discover which of your letters still remained unanswered, I found only one which held me as your debtor,—that, namely, in which you request me to tell you how far in this my leisure, which you suppose to be great, and which you desire to share with me, I am making progress in learning to discriminate those things in nature with which the senses are conversant, from those about which the understanding is employed. But I suppose it is not unknown to you, that if one becomes more and more fully imbued with false opinions,

[1] Present infinitive passive of *cupere*, to desire.

[2] Infinitive passive of verbs signifying respectively to "throw" and to "catch."

the more fully and intimately one exercises himself in them, the corresponding effect is still more easily produced in the mind by contact with truth. Nevertheless my progress, like our physical development, is so gradual, that it is difficult to define its steps distinctly, just as though there is a very great difference between a boy and a young man, no one, if daily questioned from his boyhood onward, could at any one date say that now he was no more a boy, but a young man.

2. I would not have you, however, so to apply this illustration as to suppose that, in the vigour of a more powerful understanding, I have arrived as it were at the beginning of the soul's manhood. For I am yet but a boy, though perhaps, as we say, a promising boy, rather than a good-for-nothing. For although the eyes of my mind are for the most part perturbed and oppressed by the distractions produced by blows inflicted through things sensible, they are revived and raised up again by that brief process of reasoning: "The mind and intelligence are superior to the eyes and the common faculty of sight; which could not be the case unless the things which we perceive by intelligence were more real than the things which we perceive by the faculty of sight." I pray you to help me in examining whether any valid objection can be brought against this reasoning. By it, meanwhile, I find myself restored and refreshed; and when, after calling upon God for help, I begin to rise to Him, and to those things which are in the highest sense real, I am at times satisfied with such a grasp and enjoyment of the things which eternally abide, that I sometimes wonder at my requiring any such reasoning as I have above given to persuade me of the reality of those things which in my soul are as truly present to me as I am to myself.

Please look over your letters yourself, for I own that you will be in this matter at greater pains than I, in order to make sure that I am not perchance unwittingly still owing an answer to any of them: for I can hardly believe that I have so soon got from under the burden of debts which I used to reckon as so numerous; albeit, at the same time, I cannot doubt that you have had some letters from me to which I have as yet received no reply.

LETTER V.

(A.D. 388.)

TO AUGUSTINE NEBRIDIUS SENDS GREETING.

Is it true, my beloved Augustine, that you are spending your strength and patience on the affairs of your fellow-citizens (in Thagaste), and that the leisure from distractions which you so earnestly desired is still withheld from you? Who, I would like to know, are the men who thus take advantage of your good nature, and trespass on your time? I believe that they do not know what you love most and long for. Have you no friend at hand to tell them what your heart is set upon? Will neither Romanianus nor Lucinianus do this? Let them hear me at all events. I will proclaim aloud; I will protest that God is the supreme object of your love, and that your heart's desire is to be His servant, and to cleave to Him. Fain would I persuade you to come to my home in the country, and rest here; I shall not be afraid of being denounced as a robber by those countrymen of yours, whom you love only too well, and by whom you are too warmly loved in return.

LETTER VI.

(A.D. 389.)

TO AUGUSTINE NEBRIDIUS SENDS GREETING.

1. YOUR letters I have great pleasure in keeping as carefully as my own eyes. For they are great, not indeed in length, but in the greatness of the subjects discussed in them, and in the great ability with which the truth in regard to these subjects is demonstrated. They shall bring to my ear the voice of Christ, and the teaching of Plato and of Plotinus. To me, therefore, they shall ever be pleasant to hear, because of their eloquent style; easy to read, because of their brevity; and profitable to understand, because of the wisdom which they contain. Be at pains, therefore, to teach me everything which, to your judgment, commends itself as holy or good.

As to this letter in particular, answer it when you are ready to discuss a subtle problem in regard to memory, and the images presented by the imagination.[1] My opinion is, that although there can be such images independently of memory, there is no exercise of memory independently of such images.[2] You will say, What, then, takes place when memory is exercised in recalling an act of understanding or of thought? I answer this objection by saying, that such acts can be recalled by memory for this reason, that in the supposed act of understanding or of thought we gave birth to something conditioned by space or by time, which is of such a nature that it can be reproduced by the imagination: for either we connected the use of words with the exercise of the understanding and with the thoughts, and words are conditioned by time, and thus fall within the domain of the senses or of the imaginative faculty; or if we did not join words with the mental act, our intellect at all events experienced in the act of thinking something which was of such a nature as could produce in the mind that which, by the aid of the imaginative faculty, memory could recall. These things I have stated, as usual, without much consideration, and in a somewhat confused manner: do you examine them, and, rejecting what is false, acquaint me by letter with what you hold as the truth on this subject.

2. Listen also to this question: Why, I should like to know, do we not affirm that the phantasy [imaginative faculty] derives all its images from itself, rather than say that it receives these from the senses? For it is possible that, as the intellectual faculty of the soul is indebted to the senses, not for the objects upon which the intellect is exercised, but rather for the admonition arousing it to see these objects, in the same manner the imaginative faculty may be indebted to the senses, not for the images which are the objects upon which it is exercised, but rather for the admonition arousing it to contemplate these images. And perhaps it is in this way that we are to explain the fact that the imagination per-

[1] Phantasia.

[2] Quamvis non omnis phantasia cum memoria sit, omnis tamen memoria, sine phantasia esse non possit.

ceives some objects which the senses never perceived, whereby it is shown that it has all its images within itself, and from itself. You will answer me what you think of this question also.

LETTER VII.

(A.D. 389.)

TO NEBRIDIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

CHAP. I.—*Memory may be exercised independently of such images as are presented by the imagination.*

1. I SHALL dispense with a formal preface, and to the subject on which you have for some time wished to hear my opinion I shall address myself at once; and this I do the more willingly, because the statement must take some time.

It seems to you that there can be no exercise of memory without images, or the apprehension of some objects presented by the imagination, which you have been pleased to call "phantasiæ." For my part, I entertain a different opinion. In the first place, we must observe that the things which we remember are not always things which are passing away, but are for the most part things which are permanent. Wherefore, seeing that the function of memory is to retain hold of what belongs to time past, it is certain that it embraces on the one hand things which leave us, and on the other hand things from which we go away. When, for example, I remember my father, the object which memory recalls is one which has left me, and is now no more; but when I remember Carthage, the object is in this case one which still exists, and which I have left. In both cases, however, memory retains what belongs to past time. For I remember that man and this city, not by seeing them now, but by having seen them in the past.

2. You perhaps ask me at this point, Why bring forward these facts? And you may do this the more readily, because you observe that in both the examples quoted the object remembered can come to my memory in no other way than by the apprehension of such an image as you affirm to be always

necessary. For my purpose it suffices meanwhile to have proved in this way that memory can be spoken of as embracing also those things which have not yet passed away: and now mark attentively how this supports my opinion. Some men raise a groundless objection to that most famous theory invented by Socrates, according to which the things that we learn are not introduced to our minds as new, but brought back to memory by a process of recollection; supporting their objection by affirming that memory has to do only with things which have passed away, whereas, as Plato himself has taught, those things which we learn by the exercise of the understanding are permanent, and being imperishable, cannot be numbered among things which have passed away: the mistake into which they have fallen arising obviously from this, that they do not consider that it is only the mental act of apprehension by which we have discerned these things which belongs to the past; and that it is because we have, in the stream of mental activity, left these behind, and begun in a variety of ways to attend to other things, that we require to return to them by an effort of recollection, that is, by memory. If, therefore, passing over other examples, we fix our thoughts upon eternity itself as something which is for ever permanent, and consider, on the one hand, that it does not require any image fashioned by the imagination as the vehicle by which it may be introduced into the mind; and, on the other hand, that it could never enter the mind otherwise than by our remembering it,—we shall see that, in regard to some things at least, there can be an exercise of memory without any image of the thing remembered being presented by the imagination.

CHAP. II.—*The mind is destitute of images presented by the imagination, so long as it has not been informed by the senses of external things.*

3. In the second place, as to your opinion that it is possible for the mind to form to itself images of material things independently of the services of the bodily senses, this is refuted by the following argument:—If the mind is able, before it uses the body as its instrument in perceiving material objects, to form to itself the images of these; and if, as no sane man can

doubt, the mind received more reliable and correct impressions before it was involved in the illusions which the senses produce, it follows that we must attribute greater value to the impressions of men asleep than of men awake, and of men insane than of those who are free from such mental disorder: for they are, in these states of mind, impressed by the same kind of images as impressed them before they were indebted for information to these most deceptive messengers, the senses; and thus, either the sun which they see must be more real than the sun which is seen by men in their sound judgment and in their waking hours, or that which is an illusion must be better than what is real. But if these conclusions, my dear Nebridius, are, as they obviously are, wholly absurd, it is demonstrated that the image of which you speak is nothing else than a blow inflicted by the senses, the function of which in connection with these images is not, as you write, the mere suggestion or admonition occasioning their formation by the mind within itself, but the actual bringing in to the mind, or, to speak more definitely, impressing upon it of the illusions to which through the senses we are subject. The difficulty which you feel as to the question how it comes to pass that we can conceive in thought, faces and forms which we have never seen, is one which proves the acuteness of your mind. I shall therefore do what may extend this letter beyond the usual length; not, however, beyond the length which you will approve, for I believe that the greater the fulness with which I write to you, the more welcome shall my letter be.

4. I perceive that all those images which you as well as many others call *phantasiæ*, may be most conveniently and accurately divided into three classes, according as they originate with the senses, or the imagination, or the faculty of reason. Examples of the first class are when the mind forms within itself and presents to me the image of your face, or of Carthage, or of our departed friend Verecundus, or of any other thing at present or formerly existing, which I have myself seen and perceived. Under the second class come all things which we imagine to have been, or to be so and so: *e.g.* when, for the sake of illustration in discourse, we ourselves suppose things which have no existence, but which are not prejudicial to

truth; or when we call up to our own minds a lively conception of the things described while we read history, or hear, or compose, or refuse to believe fabulous narrations. Thus, according to my own fancy, and as it may occur to my own mind, I picture to myself the appearance of Æneas, or of Medea with her team of winged dragons, or of Chremes, or Parmeno.[1] To this class belong also those things which have been brought forward as true, either by wise men wrapping up some truth in the folds of such inventions, or by foolish men building up various kinds of superstition; *e.g.* the Phlegethon of Tartarus, and the five caves of the nation of darkness,[2] and the North Pole supporting the heavens, and a thousand other prodigies of poets and of heretics. Moreover, we often say, when carrying on a discussion, "Suppose that three worlds, such as the one which we inhabit, were placed one above another;" or, "Suppose the earth to be enclosed within a four-sided figure," and so on: for all such things we picture to ourselves, and imagine according to the mood and direction of our thoughts. As for the third class of images, it has to do chiefly with numbers and measure; which are found partly in the nature of things, as when the figure of the entire world is discovered, and an image consequent upon this discovery is formed in the mind of one thinking upon it; and partly in sciences, as in geometrical figures and musical harmonies, and in the infinite variety of numerals: which, although they are, as I think, true in themselves as objects of the understanding, are nevertheless the causes of illusive exercises of the imagination, the misleading tendency of which reason itself can only with difficulty withstand; although it is not easy to preserve even the science of reasoning free from this evil, since in our logical divisions and conclusions we form to ourselves, so to speak, calculi or counters to facilitate the process of reasoning.

5. In this whole forest of images, I believe that you do not think that those of the first class belong to the mind previous to the time when they find access through the senses. On this we need not argue any further. As to the other two classes a question might reasonably be raised, were it not manifest that the

[1] *Dramatis personæ* in Terence.

[2] Referring to Manichæan notions.

mind is less liable to illusions when it has not yet been subjected to the deceptive influence of the senses, and of things sensible; and yet who can doubt that these images are much more unreal than those with which the senses acquaint us? For the things which we suppose, or believe, or picture to ourselves, are in every point wholly unreal; and the things which we perceive by sight and the other senses, are, as you see, far more near to the truth than these products of imagination. As to the third class, whatever extension of body in space I figure to myself in my mind by means of an image of this class, although it seems as if a process of thought had produced this image by scientific reasonings which did not admit of error, nevertheless I prove it to be deceptive, these same reasonings serving in turn to detect its falsity. Thus it is wholly impossible for me to believe [as, accepting your opinion, I must believe] that the soul, while not yet using the bodily senses, and not yet rudely assaulted through these fallacious instruments by that which is mortal and fleeting, lay under such ignominious subjection to illusions.

CHAP. III.—*Objection answered.*

6. "Whence then comes our capacity of conceiving in thought things which we have never seen?" What, think you, can be the cause of this, but a certain faculty of diminution and addition which is innate in the mind, and which it cannot but carry with it whithersoever it turns (a faculty which may be observed especially in relation to numbers)? By the exercise of this faculty, if the image of a crow, for example, which is very familiar to the eye, be set before the eye of the mind, as it were, it may be brought, by the taking away of some features and the addition of others, to almost any image such as never was seen by the eye. By this faculty also it comes to pass, that when men's minds habitually ponder such things, figures of this kind force their way as it were unbidden into their thoughts. Therefore it is possible for the mind, by taking away, as has been said, some things from objects which the senses have brought within its knowledge, and by adding some things, to produce in the exercise of imagination that which, as a whole, was never within the observation of any of

the senses; but the parts of it had all been within such observation, though found in a variety of different things: *e.g.*, when we were boys, born and brought up in an inland district, we could already form some idea of the sea, after we had seen water even in a small cup; but the flavour of strawberries and of cherries could in no wise enter our conceptions before we tasted these fruits in Italy. Hence it is also, that those who have been born blind know not what to answer when they are asked about light and colours. For those who have never perceived coloured objects by the senses are not capable of having the images of such objects in the mind.

7. And let it not appear to you strange, that though the mind is present in and intermingled with all those images which in the nature of things are figured or can be pictured by us, these are not evolved by the mind from within itself before it has received them through the senses from without. For we also find that, along with anger, joy, and other such emotions, we produce changes in our bodily aspect and complexion, before our thinking faculty even conceives that we have the power of producing such images [or indications of our feeling]. These follow upon the experience of the emotion in those wonderful ways (especially deserving your attentive consideration), which consist in the repeated action and reaction of hidden numbers[1] in the soul, without the intervention of any image of illusive material things. Whence I would have you understand—perceiving as you do that so many movements of the mind go on wholly independently of the images in question—that of all the movements of the mind by which it may conceivably attain to the knowledge of bodies, every other is more likely than the process of creating forms of sensible things by unaided thought, because I do not think that it is capable of any such conceptions before it uses the body and the senses.

Wherefore, my well beloved and most amiable brother, by the friendship which unites us, and by our faith in the divine law itself,[2] I would warn you never to link yourself in friendship with those shadows of the realm of darkness, and to break off without delay whatever friendship may have been begun

[1] Numeri actitantur occulti.

[2] Pro ipsius divini juris fide.

between you and them. That resistance to the sway of the bodily senses which it is our most sacred duty to practise, is wholly abandoned if we treat with fondness and flattery the blows and wounds which the senses inflict upon us.

LETTER VIII.

(A.D. 389.)

TO AUGUSTINE NEBRIDIUS SENDS GREETING.

1. As I am in haste to come to the subject of my letter, I dispense with any preface or introduction. When at any time it pleases higher (by which I mean heavenly) powers to reveal anything to us by dreams in our sleep, how is this done, my dear Augustine, or what is the method which they use? What, I say, is their method, *i.e.* by what art or magic, by what agency or enchantments, do they accomplish this? Do they by their thoughts influence our minds, so that we also have the same images presented in our thoughts? Do they bring before us, and exhibit as actually done in their own body or in their own imagination, the things which we dream? But if they actually do these things in their own body, it follows that, in order to our seeing what they thus do, we must be endowed with other bodily eyes beholding what passes within while we sleep. If, however, they are not assisted by their bodies in producing the effects in question, but frame such things in their own imaginative faculty, and thus impress our imaginations, thereby giving visible form to what we dream; why is it, I ask, that I cannot compel your imagination to reproduce those dreams which I have myself first formed by my imagination? I have undoubtedly the faculty of imagination, and it is capable of presenting to my own mind the picture of whatever I please; and yet I do not thereby cause any dream in you, although I see that even our bodies have the power of originating dreams in us. For by means of the bond of sympathy uniting it to the soul, the body compels us in strange ways to repeat or reproduce by imagination anything which it has once experienced. Thus often in sleep, if we are thirsty, we dream that we drink; and if we are hungry, we seem to

ourselves to be eating; and many other instances there are in which, by some mode of exchange, so to speak, things are transferred through the imagination from the body to the soul.

Be not surprised at the want of elegance and subtlety with which these questions are here stated to you; consider the obscurity in which the subject is involved, and the inexperience of the writer; be it yours to do your utmost to supply his deficiencies.

LETTER IX.

(A.D. 389.)

TO NEBRIDIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. ALTHOUGH you know my mind well, you are perhaps not aware how much I long to enjoy your society. This great blessing, however, God will some day bestow on me. I have read your letter, so genuine in its utterances, in which you complain of your being in solitude, and, as it were, forsaken by your friends, in whose society you found the sweetest charm of life. But what else can I suggest to you than that which I am persuaded is already your exercise? Commune with your own soul, and raise it up, as far as you are able, unto God. For in Him you hold us also by a firmer bond, not by means of bodily images, which we must meanwhile be content to use in remembering each other, but by means of that faculty of thought through which we realize the fact of our separation from each other.

2. In considering your letters, in answering all of which I have certainly had to answer questions of no small difficulty and importance, I was not a little stunned by the one in which you ask me by what means certain thoughts and dreams are put into our minds by higher powers or by superhuman agents.[1] The question is a great one, and, as your own prudence must convince you, would require, in order to its being satisfactorily answered, not a mere letter, but a full oral discussion or a whole treatise. I shall try, however, knowing as I do your talents, to throw out a few germs of thought which may shed light on this question, in order that you may

[1] Dæmonibus.

either complete the exhaustive treatment of the subject by your own efforts, or at least not despair of the possibility of this important matter being investigated with satisfactory results.

3. It is my opinion that every movement of the mind affects in some degree the body. We know that this is patent even to our senses, dull and sluggish though they are, when the movements of the mind are somewhat vehement, as when we are angry, or sad, or joyful. Whence we may conjecture that, in like manner, when thought is busy, although no bodily effect of the mental act is discernible by us, there may be some such effect discernible by beings of aërial or etherial essence whose perceptive faculty is in the highest degree acute,—so much so, that, in comparison with it, our faculties are scarcely worthy to be called perceptive. Therefore these footprints of its motion, so to speak, which the mind impresses on the body, may perchance not only remain, but remain as it were with the force of a habit; and it may be that, when these are secretly stirred and played upon, they bear thoughts and dreams into our minds, according to the pleasure of the person moving or touching them: and this is done with marvellous facility. For if, as is manifest, the attainments of our earth-born and sluggish bodies in the department of exercise, *e.g.* in the playing of musical instruments, dancing on the tight-rope, etc., are almost incredible, it is by no means unreasonable to suppose that beings which act with the powers of an aërial or etherial body upon our bodies, and are by the constitution of their natures able to pass unhindered through these bodies, should be capable of much greater quickness in moving whatever they wish, while we, though not perceiving what they do, are nevertheless affected by the results of their activity. We have a somewhat parallel instance in the fact that we do not perceive how it is that superfluity of bile impels us to more frequent outbursts of passionate feeling; and yet it does produce this effect, while this superfluity of bile is itself an effect of our yielding to such passionate feelings.

4. If, however, you hesitate to accept this example as a parallel one, when it is thus cursorily stated by me, turn it over in your thoughts as fully as you can. The mind, if it

be continually obstructed by some difficulty in the way of doing and accomplishing what it desires, is thereby made continually angry. For anger, so far as I can judge of its nature, seems to me to be a tumultuous eagerness to take out of the way those things which restrict our freedom of action. Hence it is that usually we vent our anger not only on men, but on such a thing, for example, as the pen with which we write, bruising or breaking it in our passion; and so does the gambler with his dice, the artist with his pencil, and every man with the instrument which he may be using, if he thinks that he is in some way thwarted by it. Now medical men themselves tell us that by these frequent fits of anger bile is increased. But, on the other hand, when the bile is increased, we are easily, and almost without any provocation whatever, made angry. Thus the effect which the mind has by its movement produced upon the body, is capable in its turn of moving the mind again.

5. These things might be treated at very great length, and our knowledge of the subject might be brought to greater certainty and fulness by a large induction from relevant facts. But take along with this letter the one which I sent you lately concerning images and memory,[1] and study it somewhat more carefully; for it was manifest to me, from your reply, that it had not been fully understood. When, to the statements now before you, you add the portion of that letter in which I spoke of a certain natural faculty whereby the mind does in thought add to or take from any object as it pleases, you will see that it is possible for us both in dreams and in waking thoughts to conceive the images of bodily forms which we have never seen.

LETTER X.

(A.D. 389.)

TO NEBRIDIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. No question of yours ever kept me so disturbed while reflecting upon it, as the remark which I read in your last letter,

[1] See Letter VII.

in which you chide me for being indifferent as to making arrangements by which it may be possible for us to live together. A grave charge, and one which, were it not unfounded, would be most perilous. But since satisfactory reasons seem to prove that we can live as we would wish to do better here than at Carthage, or even in the country, I am wholly at a loss, my dear Nebridius, what to do with you. Shall such a conveyance as may best suit your state of health be sent from us to you? Our friend Lucinianus informs me that you can be carried without injury in a palanquin. But I consider, on the other hand, how your mother, who could not bear your absence from her when you were in health, will be much less able to bear it when you are ill. Shall I myself then come to you? This I cannot do, for there are some here who cannot accompany me, and whom I would think it a crime for me to leave. For you already can pass your time agreeably when left to the resources of your own mind; but in their case the object of present efforts is that they may attain to this. Shall I go and come frequently, and so be now with you, now with them? But this is neither to live together, nor to live as we would wish to do. For the journey is not a short one, but so great at least that the attempt to perform it frequently would prevent our gaining the wished-for leisure. To this is added the bodily weakness through which, as you know, I cannot accomplish what I wish, unless I cease wholly to wish what is beyond my strength.

2. To occupy one's thoughts throughout life with journeyings which you cannot perform tranquilly and easily, is not the part of a man whose thoughts are engaged with that last journey which is called death, and which alone, as you understand, really deserves serious consideration. God has indeed granted to some few men whom He has ordained to bear rule over churches, the capacity of not only awaiting calmly, but even desiring eagerly, that last journey, while at the same time they can meet without disquietude the toils of those other journeyings; but I do not believe that either to those who are urged to accept such duties through desire for worldly honour, or to those who, although occupying a private station, covet a busy life, so great a boon is given as that amid bustle

and agitating meetings, and journeyings hither and thither, they should acquire that familiarity with death which we seek: for both of these classes had it in their power to seek edification[1] in retirement. Or if this be not true, I am, I shall not say the most foolish of all men, but at least the most indolent, since I find it impossible, without the aid of such an interval of relief from care and toil, to taste and relish that only real good. Believe me, there is need of much withdrawal of oneself from the tumult of the things which are passing away, in order that there may be formed in man, not through insensibility, not through presumption, not through vainglory, not through superstitious blindness, the ability to say, "I fear nought." By this means also is attained that enduring joy with which no pleasurable excitement found elsewhere is in any degree to be compared.

3. But if such a life does not fall to the lot of man, how is it that calmness of spirit is our occasional experience? Wherefore is this experience more frequent, in proportion to the devotion with which any one in his inmost soul worships God? Why does this tranquillity for the most part abide with one in the business of life, when he goes forth to its duties from that sanctuary? Why are there times in which, speaking, we do not fear death, and, silent, even desire it? I say to you—for I would not say it to every one—to you whose visits to the upper world I know well, Will you, who have often felt how sweetly the soul lives when it dies to all mere bodily affections, deny that it is possible for the whole life of man to become at length so exempt from fear, that he may be justly called wise? Or will you venture to affirm that this state of mind on which reason leans has ever been your lot, except when you were shut up to commune with your own heart? Since these things are so, you see that it remains only for you to share with me the labour of devising how we may arrange to live together. You know much better than I do what is to be done in regard to your mother, whom your brother Victor, of course, does not leave alone. I will write no more, lest I turn your mind away from considering this proposal.

[1] Text, "deificari" for "ædificari" (?).

LETTER XI.

(A.D. 389.)

TO NEBRIDIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. WHEN the question, which has long been brought before me by you with something even of friendly chiding, as to the way in which we might live together, was seriously disturbing my mind, and I had resolved to write to you, and to beg an answer from you bearing exclusively on this subject, and to employ my pen on no other theme pertaining to our studies, in order that the discussion of this matter between us might be brought to an end, the very short and indisputable conclusion stated in your letter lately received at once delivered me from all further solicitude; your statement being to the effect that on this matter there ought to be no further deliberation, because as soon as it is in my power to come to you, or in your power to come to me, we shall feel alike constrained to improve the opportunity. My mind being thus, as I have said, at rest, I looked over all your letters, that I might see what yet remained unanswered. In these I have found so many questions, that even if they were easily solved, they would by their mere number more than exhaust the time and talents of any man. But they are so difficult, that if the answering of even one of them were laid upon me, I would not hesitate to confess myself heavily burdened. The design of this introductory statement is to make you desist for a little from asking new questions until I am free from debt, and that you confine yourself in your answer to the statement of your opinion of my replies. At the same time, I know that it is to my own loss that I postpone for even a little while the participation of your divine thoughts.

2. Hear, therefore, the view which I hold concerning the mystery of the Incarnation which the religion wherein we have been instructed commends to our faith and knowledge as having been accomplished in order to our salvation; which question I have chosen to discuss in preference to all the rest, although it is not the most easily answered. For those questions

which are proposed by you concerning this world do not appear to me to have a sufficiently direct reference to the obtaining of a happy life; and whatever pleasure they yield when investigated, there is reason to fear lest they take up time which ought to be devoted to better things. With regard, then, to the subject which I have at this time undertaken, first of all I am surprised that you were perplexed by the question why not the Father, but the Son, is said to have become incarnate, and yet were not also perplexed by the same question in regard to the Holy Spirit. For the union of Persons in the Trinity is in the Catholic faith set forth and believed, and by a few holy and blessed ones understood, to be so inseparable, that whatever is done by the Trinity must be regarded as being done by the Father, and by the Son, and by the Holy Spirit together; and that nothing is done by the Father which is not also done by the Son and by the Holy Spirit; and nothing done by the Holy Spirit which is not also done by the Father and by the Son; and nothing done by the Son which is not also done by the Father and by the Holy Spirit. From which it seems to follow as a consequence, that the whole Trinity assumed human nature; for if the Son did so, but the Father and the Spirit did not, there is something in which they act separately.[1] Why, then, in our mysteries and sacred symbols, is the Incarnation ascribed only to the Son? This is a very great question, so difficult, and on a subject so vast, that it is impossible either to give a sufficiently clear statement, or to support it by satisfactory proofs. I venture, however, since I am writing to you, to indicate rather than explain what my sentiments are, in order that you, from your talents and our intimacy, through which you thoroughly know me, may for yourself fill up the outline.

3. There is no nature, Nebridius—and, indeed, there is no substance—which does not contain in itself and exhibit these three things: first, that it *is;* next, that it is *this* or *that;* and third, that as far as possible it *remains* as it is. The first of these three presents the original cause of nature from which all things exist; the second presents the form[2] according to which all things are fashioned and formed in a particular

[1] Aliquid præter invicem faciunt. [2] Species.

way; the third presents a certain permanence, so to speak, in which all things are. Now, if it be possible that a thing can *be*, and yet not be *this* or *that*, and not *remain* in its own generic form; or that a thing can be *this* or *that*, and yet not *be*, and not *remain* in its own generic form, so far as it is possible for it to do so; or that a thing can *remain* in its own generic form according to the force belonging to it, and yet not *be*, and not be *this* or *that*,—then it is also possible that in that Trinity one Person can do something in which the others have no part. But if you see that whatever *is* must forthwith be *this* or *that*, and must *remain* so far as possible in its own generic form, you see also that these Three do nothing in which all have not a part. I see that as yet I have only treated a portion of this question, which makes its solution difficult. But I wished to open up briefly to you—if, indeed, I have succeeded in this—how great in the system of Catholic truth is the doctrine of the inseparability of the Persons of the Trinity, and how difficult to be understood.

4. Hear now how that which disquiets your mind may disquiet it no more. The mode of existence (Species—the second of the three above named) which is properly ascribed to the Son, has to do with training, and with a certain art, if I may use that word in regard to such things, and with the exercise of intellect, by which the mind itself is moulded in its thoughts upon things. Therefore, since by that assumption of human nature the work accomplished was the effective presentation to us of a certain training in the right way of living, and exemplification of that which is commanded, under the majesty and perspicuousness of certain sentences, it is not without reason that all this is ascribed to the Son. For in many things which I leave your own reflection and prudence to suggest, although the constituent elements be many, some one nevertheless stands out above the rest, and therefore not unreasonably claims a right of possession, as it were, of the whole for itself: as, *e.g.*, in the three kinds of questions above mentioned,[1] although the question raised be whether a thing *is* or not, this involves necessarily also both *what* it is (this or that), for of course it cannot *be* at all unless it be something,

[1] An sit, quid sit, quale sit.

and whether it ought to be approved of or disapproved of, for whatever *is* is a fit subject for some opinion as to its *quality*; in like manner, when the question raised is *what* a thing is, this necessarily involves both that it *is*, and that its quality may be tried by some standard; and in the same way, when the question raised is what is the *quality* of a thing, this necessarily involves that that thing *is*, and is *something*, since all things are inseparably joined to themselves;—nevertheless, the question in each of the above cases takes its name not from all the three, but from the special point towards which the inquirer directed his attention. Now there is a certain training necessary for men, by which they might be instructed and formed after some model. We cannot say, however, regarding that which is accomplished in men by this training, either that it does not exist, or that it is not a thing to be desired [*i.e.* we cannot say *what* it is, without involving an affirmation both of its *existence* and of its *quality*]; but we seek first to know *what* it is, for in knowing this we know that by which we may infer that it is something, and in which we may remain. Therefore the first thing necessary was, that a certain rule and pattern of training be plainly exhibited; and this was done by the divinely appointed method of the Incarnation, which is properly to be ascribed to the Son, in order that from it should follow both our knowledge, through the Son, of the Father Himself, *i.e.* of the one first principle whence all things have their being, and a certain inward and ineffable charm and sweetness of remaining in that knowledge, and of despising all mortal things,—a gift and work which is properly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Wherefore, although in all things the Divine Persons act perfectly in common, and without possibility of separation, nevertheless their operations behoved to be exhibited in such a way as to be distinguished from each other, on account of the weakness which is in us, who have fallen from unity into variety. For no one ever succeeds in raising another to the height on which he himself stands, unless he stoop somewhat towards the level which that other occupies.

You have here a letter which may not indeed put an end to your disquietude in regard to this doctrine, but which may

set your own thoughts to work upon a kind of solid foundation; so that, with the talents which I well know you to possess, you may follow, and, by the piety in which especially we must be stedfast, may apprehend that which still remains to be discovered.

LETTER XII.

(A.D. 389.)

Omitted, as only a fragment of the text of the letter is preserved.

LETTER XIII.

(A.D. 389.)

TO NEBRIDIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. I DO not feel pleasure in writing of the subjects which I was wont to discuss; I am not at liberty to write of new themes. I see that the one would not suit you, and that for the other I have no leisure. For, since I left you, neither opportunity nor leisure has been given me for taking up and revolving the things which we are accustomed to investigate together. The winter nights are indeed too long, and they are not entirely spent in sleep by me; but when I have leisure, other subjects [than those which we used to discuss] present themselves as having a prior claim on my consideration.[1] What, then, am I to do? Am I to be to you as one dumb, who cannot speak, or as one silent, who will not speak? Neither of these things is desired, either by you or by me. Come, then, and hear what the end of the night succeeded in eliciting from me during the time in which it was devoted to following out the subject of this letter.

2. You cannot but remember that a question often agitated between us, and which kept us agitated, breathless, and excited, was one concerning a body or kind of body, which be-

[1] We leave untranslated the words "quæ *diffirmando* sunt otio necessaria," the text here being evidently corrupt.

longs perpetually to the soul, and which, as you recollect, is called by some its vehicle. It is manifest that this thing, if it moves from place to place, is not cognisable by the understanding. But whatever is not cognisable by the understanding cannot be understood. It is not, however, utterly impossible to form an opinion approximating to the truth concerning a thing which is outside the province of the intellect, if it lies within the province of the senses. But when a thing is beyond the province of the intellect and of the senses, the speculations to which it gives rise are too baseless and trifling; and the thing of which we treat now is of this nature, if indeed it exists. Why, then, I ask, do we not finally dismiss this unimportant question, and with prayer to God raise ourselves to the supreme serenity of the Highest existing nature?

3. Perhaps you may here reply: "Although bodies cannot be perceived by the understanding, we can perceive with the understanding many things concerning material objects; *e.g.* we know that matter exists. For who will deny this, or affirm that in this we have to do with the probable rather than the true? Thus, though matter itself lies among things probable, it is a most indisputable truth that something like it exists in nature. Matter itself is therefore pronounced to be an object cognisable by the senses; but the assertion of its existence is pronounced to be a truth cognisable by the intellect, for it cannot be perceived otherwise. And so this unknown body, about which we inquire, upon which the soul depends for its power to move from place to place, may possibly be cognisable by senses more powerful than we possess, though not by ours; and at all events, the question whether it exists is one which may be solved by our understandings."

4. If you intend to say this, let me remind you that the mental act we call understanding is done by us in two ways: either by the mind and reason within itself, as when we understand that the intellect itself exists; or by occasion of suggestion from the senses, as in the case above mentioned, when we understand that matter exists. In the first of these two kinds of acts we understand through ourselves, *i.e.* by asking instruction of God concerning that which is within us; but in the

second we understand by asking instruction of God regarding that of which intimation is given to us by the body and the senses. If these things be found true, no one can by his understanding discover whether that body of which you speak exists or not, but the person to whom his senses have given some intimation concerning it. If there be any living creature to which the senses give such intimation, since we at least see plainly that we are not among the number, I regard the conclusion established which I began to state a little ago, that the question [about the vehicle of the soul] is one which does not concern us. I wish you would consider this over and over again, and take care to let me know the product of your consideration.

LETTER XIV.

(A.D. 389.)

TO NEBRIDIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREEEING.

1. I HAVE preferred to reply to your last letter, not because I undervalued your earlier questions, or enjoyed them less, but because in answering you I undertake a greater task than you think. For although you enjoined me to send you a superlatively long[1] letter, I have not so much leisure as you imagine, and as you know I have always wished to have, and do still wish. Ask not why it is so: for I could more easily enumerate the things by which I am hindered, than explain why I am hindered by them.

2. You ask why it is that you and I, though separate individuals, do many things which are the same, but the sun does not the same as the other heavenly bodies. Of this thing I must attempt to explain the cause. Now, if you and I do the same things, the sun also does many things which the other heavenly bodies do: if in some things it does not the same as the others, this is equally true of you and me. I walk, and you walk; it is moved, and they are moved: I keep awake, and you keep awake; it shines, and they shine: I dis-

[1] The phrase used by Nebridius had been "longior quam longissima," which Augustine here quotes, and afterwards playfully alludes to in sec. 3.

cuss, and you discuss; it goes its round, and they go their rounds. And yet there is no fitness of comparison between mental acts and things visible. If, however, as is reasonable, you compare mind with mind, the heavenly bodies, if they have any mind, must be regarded as even more uniform than men in their thoughts or contemplations, or whatever term may more conveniently express such activity in them. Moreover, as to the movements of the body, you will find, if you reflect on this with your wonted attention, that it is impossible for precisely the same thing to be done by two persons. When we walk together, do you think that we both necessarily do the same thing? Far be such thought from one of your wisdom! For the one of us who walks on the side towards the north, must either, in taking the same step as the other, get in advance of him, or walk more slowly than he does. Neither of these things is perceptible by the senses; but you, if I am not mistaken, look to what we know by the understanding rather than to what we learn by the senses. If, however, we move from the pole towards the south, joined and clinging to each other as closely as possible, and treading on a sheet of marble or even ivory smooth and level, a perfect identity is as unattainable in our motions as in the throbbings of our pulses, or in our figures and faces. Put us aside, and place in our stead the sons of Glaucus, and you gain nothing by this substitution: for even in these twins so perfectly resembling each other, the necessity for the motions of each being peculiarly his own, is as great as the necessity for their birth as separate individuals.

3. You will perhaps say: "The difference in this case is one which only reason can discover; but the difference between the sun and the other heavenly bodies is to the senses also patent." If you insist upon my looking to their difference in magnitude, you know how many things may be said as to the distances by which they are removed from us, and into how great uncertainty that which you speak of as obvious may thus be brought back. I may, however, concede that the actual size corresponds with the apparent size of the heavenly bodies, for I myself believe this; and I ask you to show me any one whose senses were incapable of remarking

the prodigious stature of Nævius, exceeding by a foot that of the tallest man.[1] By the way, I think you have been just too eager to discover some man to match him; and when you did not succeed in the search, have resolved to make me stretch out my letter so as to rival his dimensions.[2] If therefore even on earth such variety in size may be seen, I think that it need not surprise us to find the like in the heavens. If, however, the thing which moves your surprise is that the light of no other heavenly body than the sun fills the day, who, I ask you, has ever been manifested to men so great as that Man whom God took into union with Himself, in another way entirely than He has taken all other holy and wise men who ever lived? for if you compare Him with other men who were wise, He is separated from them by superiority greater far than that which the sun has above the other heavenly bodies. This comparison let me charge you by all means attentively to study; for it is not impossible that to your singularly gifted mind I may have suggested, by this cursory remark, the solution of a question which you once proposed to me concerning the humanity of Christ.

4. You also ask me whether that highest Truth and highest Wisdom and Form (or Archetype) of things, by whom all things were made, and whom our creeds confess to be the only-begotten Son of God, contains the idea[3] of mankind in general, or also of each individual of our race. A great question. My opinion is, that in the creation of man there was in Him the idea only of man generally, and not of you or me as individuals; but that in the cycle of time the idea of each individual, with all the varieties distinguishing men from each other, lives in that pure Truth. This I grant is very obscure; yet I know not by what kind of illustration light may be shed upon it, unless perhaps we betake ourselves to those sciences which lie wholly within our minds. In geometry, the idea of an angle is one thing, the idea of a square is another. As often, therefore, as I please to describe an angle, the idea of the angle, and that alone, is present to my mind; but I can never

[1] The text contains the word "sex" here, which is omitted in the translation. The reading is uncertain.

[2] See note on sec. 1.

[3] Ratio.

describe a square unless I fix my attention upon the idea of four angles at the same time. In like manner, every man, considered as an individual man, has been made according to one idea proper to himself; but in the making of a nation, although the idea according to which it is made be also one, it is the idea not of one, but of many men collectively. If, therefore, Nebridius is a part of this universe, as he is, and the whole universe is made up of parts, the God who made the universe could not but have in His plan the idea of all the parts. Wherefore, since there is in this the idea of a very great number of men, it does not belong to man himself as such; although, on the other hand, all the individuals are in wonderful ways reduced to one. But you will consider this at your convenience. I beg you meanwhile to be content with what I have written, although I have already outdone Nævius himself.

LETTER XV.

(A.D. 390.)

TO ROMANIANUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. THIS letter indicates a scarcity of paper,[1] but not so as to testify that parchment is plentiful here. My ivory tablets I used in the letter which I sent to your uncle. You will more readily excuse this scrap of parchment, because what I wrote to him could not be delayed, and I thought that not to write to you for want of better material would be most absurd. But if any tablets of mine are with you, I request you to send them to meet a case of this kind. I have written something, as the Lord has deigned to enable me, concerning the Catholic religion, which before my coming I wish to send to you, if my paper does not fail me in the meantime. For you will receive with indulgence any kind of writing from the office of the brethren who are with me. As to the manuscripts of which you speak, I have entirely forgotten them, except the books *de Oratore;* but I could not have written anything better than that you should take such of them as

[1] Charta.

you please, and I am still of the same mind; for at this distance I know not what else I can do in the matter.

2. It gave me very great pleasure that in your last letter you desired to make me a sharer of your joy at home; but

> "Wouldst thou have me forget how soon the deep,
> So tranquil now, may wear another face,
> And rouse these slumbering waves?"[1]

Yet I know you would not have me forget this, nor are you yourself unmindful of it. Wherefore, if some leisure is granted you for more profound meditation, improve this divine blessing. For when these things fall to our lot, we should not only congratulate ourselves, but show our gratitude to those to whom we owe them; for if in the stewardship of temporal blessings we act in a manner that is just and kind, and with the moderation and sobriety of spirit which befits the transient nature of these possessions,—if they are held by us without laying hold on us, are multiplied without entangling us, and serve us without bringing us into bondage,—such conduct entitles us to the recompense of eternal blessings. For by Him who is the Truth it was said: "If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who will give you that which is your own?" Let us therefore disengage ourselves from care about the passing things of time; let us seek the blessings that are imperishable and sure; let us soar above our worldly possessions. The bee does not the less need its wings when it has gathered an abundant store; for if it sink in the honey, it dies.

LETTER XVI.

(A.D. 390.)

FROM MAXIMUS OF MADAURA TO AUGUSTINE.

1. DESIRING to be frequently made glad by communications from you, and by the stimulus of your reasoning with which in a most pleasant way, and without violation of good feeling, you recently attacked me, I have not forborne from replying to you in the same spirit, lest you should call my silence an

[1] Mene salis placidi vultum fluctusque quietos
Ignorare jubes?—*Æn.* v. 848, 849.

acknowledgment of being in the wrong. But I beg you to give these sentences an indulgent kindly hearing, if you judge them to give evidence of the feebleness of old age.

Grecian mythology tells us, but without sufficient warrant for our believing the statement, that Mount Olympus is the dwelling-place of the gods. But we actually see the market-place of our town occupied by a crowd of beneficent deities; and we approve of this. Who could ever be so frantic and infatuated as to deny that there is one supreme God, without beginning, without natural offspring, who is, as it were, the great and mighty Father of all? The powers of this Deity, diffused throughout the universe which He has made, we worship under many names, as we are all ignorant of His true name, the name God[1] being common to all kinds of religious belief. Thus it comes, that while in diverse supplications we approach separately, as it were, certain parts of the Divine Being, we are seen in reality to be the worshippers of Him in whom all these parts are one.

2. Such is the greatness of your delusion in another matter, that I cannot conceal the impatience with which I regard it. For who can bear to find Mygdo honoured above that Jupiter who hurls the thunderbolt; or Sanæ above Juno, Minerva, Venus, and Vesta; or the arch-martyr Namphanio (oh horror!) above all the immortal gods together? Among the immortals, Lucitas also is looked up to with no less religious reverence, and others in an endless list (having names abhorred both by gods and by men), who, when they met the ignominious end which their character and conduct had deserved, put the crowning act upon their criminal career by affecting to die nobly in a good cause, though conscious of the infamous deeds for which they were condemned. The tombs of these men (it is a folly almost beneath our notice) are visited by crowds of simpletons, who forsake our temples and despise the memory of their ancestors, so that the prediction of the indignant bard is notably fulfilled: "Rome shall, in the temples of the gods, swear by the shades of men."[2] To me it almost seems

[1] Deus.

[2] Inque Deûm templis jurabit Roma per umbras.
LUCAN, *Pharsalia*, vii. 459

at this time as if a second campaign of Actium had begun, in which Egyptian monsters, doomed soon to perish, dare to brandish their weapons against the gods of the Romans.

3. But, O man of great wisdom, I beseech you, lay aside and reject for a little while the vigour of your eloquence, which has made you everywhere renowned; lay down also the arguments of Chrysippus, which you are accustomed to use in debate; leave for a brief season your logic, which aims in the forthputting of its energies to leave nothing certain to any one; and show me plainly and actually who is that God whom you Christians claim as belonging specially to you, and pretend to see present among you in secret places. For it is in open day, before the eyes and ears of all men, that we worship our gods with pious supplications, and propitiate them by acceptable sacrifices; and we take pains that these things be seen and approved by all.

4. Being, however, infirm and old, I withdraw myself from further prosecution of this contest, and willingly consent to the opinion of the rhetorician of Mantua, "Each one is drawn by that which pleases himself best."[1]

After this, O excellent man, who hast turned aside from my faith, I have no doubt that this letter will be stolen by some thief, and destroyed by fire or otherwise. Should this happen, the paper will be lost, but not my letter, of which I will always retain a copy, accessible to all religious persons. May you be preserved by the gods, through whom we all, who are mortals on the surface of this earth, with apparent discord but real harmony, revere and worship Him who is the common Father of the gods and of all mortals.

LETTER XVII.

(A.D. 390.)

TO MAXIMUS OF MADAURA.

1. ARE we engaged in serious debate with each other, or is it your desire that we merely amuse ourselves? For, from the language of your letter, I am at a loss to know whether it is

[1] Virg. *Eclog.* ii. 65: Trahit sua quemque voluptas.

due to the weakness of your cause, or through the courteousness of your manners, that you have preferred to show yourself more witty than weighty in argument. For, in the first place, a comparison was drawn by you between Mount Olympus and your market-place, the reason for which I cannot divine, unless it was in order to remind me that on the said mountain Jupiter pitched his camp when he was at war with his father, as we are taught by history, which your religionists call sacred; and that in the said market-place Mars is represented in two images, the one unarmed, the other armed, and that a statue of a man placed over against these restrains with three extended fingers the fury of their demonship from the injuries which he would willingly inflict on the citizens. Could I then ever believe that by mentioning that market-place you intended to revive my recollection of such divinities, unless you wished that we should pursue the discussion in a jocular spirit rather than in earnest? But in regard to the sentence in which you said that such gods as these are members, so to speak, of the one great God, I admonish you by all means, since you vouchsafe such an opinion, to abstain very carefully from profane jestings of this kind. For if you speak of the One God, concerning whom learned and unlearned are, as the ancients have said, agreed, do you affirm that those whose savage fury—or, if you prefer it, whose power—the image of a dead man keeps in check are members of Him? I might say more on this point, and your own judgment may show you how wide a door for the refutation of your views is here thrown open. But I restrain myself, lest I should be thought by you to act more as a rhetorician than as one earnestly defending truth.

2. As to your collecting of certain Carthaginian names of deceased persons, by which you think reproach may be cast, in what seems to you a witty manner, against our religion, I do not know whether I ought to answer this taunt, or to pass it by in silence. For if to your good sense these things appear as trifling as they really are, I have not time to spare for such pleasantry. If, however, they seem to you important, I am surprised that it did not occur to you, who are apt to be disturbed by absurdly-sounding names, that your religionists

have among their priests Eucaddires, and among their deities Abaddires. I do not suppose that these were absent from your mind when you were writing, but that, with your courtesy and genial humour, you wished for the unbending of our minds, to recall to our recollection what ludicrous things are in your superstition. For surely, considering that you are an African, and that we are both settled in Africa, you could not have so forgotten yourself when writing to Africans as to think that Punic names were a fit theme for censure. For if we interpret the signification of these words, what else does Namphanio mean than "man of the good foot," *i.e.* whose coming brings with it some good fortune, as we are wont to say of one whose coming to us has been followed by some prosperous event, that he came with a lucky foot? And if the Punic language is rejected by you, you virtually deny what has been admitted by most learned men, that many things have been wisely preserved from oblivion in books written in the Punic tongue. Nay, you ought even to be ashamed of having been born in the country in which the cradle of this language is still warm, *i.e.* in which this language was originally, and until very recently, the language of the people. If, however, it is not reasonable to take offence at the mere sound of names, and you admit that I have given correctly the meaning of the one in question, you have reason for being dissatisfied with your friend Virgil, who gives to your god Hercules an invitation to the sacred rites celebrated by Evander in his honour, in these terms, "Come to us, and to these rites in thine honour, with auspicious foot."[1] He wishes him to come "with auspicious foot;" that is to say, he wishes Hercules to come as a Namphanio, the name about which you are pleased to make much mirth at our expense. But if you have a penchant for ridicule, you have among yourselves ample material for witticisms—the god Stercutius, the goddess Cloacina, the Bald Venus, the gods Fear and Pallor, and the goddess Fever, and others of the same kind without number, to whom the ancient Roman idolaters erected temples, and judged it right to offer worship; which if you neglect, you are neglecting Roman gods, thereby making it manifest that

[1] Virg. *Æneid*, viii. 302: Et nos et tua dexter adi pede sacra secundo.

you are not thoroughly versed in the sacred rites of Rome; and yet you despise and pour contempt on Punic names, as if you were a devotee at the altars of Roman deities.

3. In truth, however, I believe that perhaps you do not value these sacred rites any more than we do, but only take from them some unaccountable pleasure in your time of passing through this world: for you have no hesitation about taking refuge under Virgil's wing, and defending yourself with a line of his:

"Each one is drawn by that which pleases himself best."[1]

If, then, the authority of Maro pleases you, as you indicate that it does, you will be pleased with such lines as these: "First Saturn came from lofty Olympus, fleeing before the arms of Jupiter, an exile bereft of his realms,"[2]—and other such statements, by which he aims at making it understood that Saturn and your other gods like him were men. For he had read much history, confirmed by ancient authority, which Cicero also had read, who makes the same statement in his dialogues, in terms more explicit than we would venture to insist upon, and labours to bring it to the knowledge of men so far as the times in which he lived permitted.

4. As to your statement, that your religious services are to be preferred to ours because you worship the gods in public, but we use more retired places of meeting, let me first ask you how you could have forgotten your Bacchus, whom you consider it right to exhibit only to the eyes of the few who are initiated. You, however, think that, in making mention of the public celebration of your sacred rites, you intended only to make sure that we would place before our eyes the spectacle presented by your magistrates and the chief men of the city when intoxicated and raging along your streets; in which solemnity, if you are possessed by a god, you surely see of what nature he must be who deprives men of their reason. If, however, this madness is only feigned, what say you to this keeping of things hidden in a service which you boast of as

[1] Trahit sua quemque voluptas.

[2] Primus ab æthereo venit Saturnus Olympo
Arma Jovis fugiens et regnis exsul ademptis.
Æn. viii. 319, 320.

public, or what good purpose is served by so base an imposition? Moreover, why do you not foretell future events in your songs, if you are endowed with the prophetic gift? or why do you rob the bystanders, if you are in your sound mind?

5. Since, then, you have recalled to our remembrance by your letter these and other things which I think it better to pass over meanwhile, why may not we make sport of your gods, which, as every one who knows your mind, and has read your letters, is well aware, are made sport of abundantly by yourself? Therefore, if you wish us to discuss these subjects in a way becoming your years and wisdom, and, in fact, as may be justly required of us, in connection with our purpose, by our dearest friends, seek some topic worthy of being debated between us; and be careful to say on behalf of your gods such things as may prevent us from supposing that you are intentionally betraying your own cause, when we find you rather bringing to our remembrance things which may be said against them than alleging anything in their defence. In conclusion, however, lest this should be unknown to you, and you might thus be brought unwittingly into jestings which are profane, let me assure you that by the Christian Catholics (by whom a church has been set up in your own town also) no deceased person is worshipped, and that nothing, in short, which has been made and fashioned by God is worshipped as a divine power. This worship is rendered by them only to God Himself, who framed and fashioned all things.[1]

These things shall be more fully treated of, with the help of the one true God, whenever I learn that you are disposed to discuss them seriously.

[1] We give the original of this important sentence: "Scias a Christianis catholicis (quorum in vestro oppido etiam ecclesia constituta est) nullum coli mortuorum, nihil denique ut numen adorari quod sit factum et conditum a Deo, sed unum ipsum Deum qui fecit et condidit omnia."

LETTER XVIII.

(A.D. 390.)

TO CŒLESTINUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. Oh how I wish that I could continually say one thing to you! It is this: Let us shake off the burden of unprofitable cares, and bear only those which are useful. For I do not know whether anything like complete exemption from care is to be hoped for in this world. I wrote to you, but have received no reply. I sent you as many of my books against the Manicheans as I could send in a finished and revised condition, and as yet nothing has been communicated to me as to the impression they have made on your[1] judgment and feelings. It is now a fitting opportunity for me to ask them back, and for you to return them. I beg you therefore not to lose time in sending them, along with a letter from yourself, by which I eagerly long to know what you are doing with them, or with what further help you think that you require still to be furnished in order to assail that error with success.

2. As I know you well, I ask you to accept and ponder the following brief sentences on a great theme. There is a nature which is susceptible of change with respect to both place and time, namely, the corporeal. There is another nature which is in no way susceptible of change with respect to place, but only with respect to time, namely, the spiritual. And there is a third Nature which can be changed neither in respect to place nor in respect to time: that is, God. Those natures of which I have said that they are mutable in some respect are called creatures; the Nature which is immutable is called Creator. Seeing, however, that we affirm the existence of anything only in so far as it continues and is one (in consequence of which, unity is the condition essential to beauty in every form), you cannot fail to distinguish, in this classification of natures, which exists in the highest possible manner; and which occupies the lowest place, yet is within the range of existence; and which occupies the middle place,

[1] The sense here obviously requires "vestri" instead of "nostri," which is in the text.

greater than the lowest, but coming short of the highest. That highest is essential blessedness; the lowest, that which cannot be either blessed or wretched; and the intermediate nature lives in wretchedness when it stoops towards that which is lowest, and in blessedness when it turns towards that which is highest. He who believes in Christ does not sink his affections in that which is lowest, is not proudly self-sufficient in that which is intermediate, and thus he is qualified for union and fellowship with that which is highest; and this is the sum of the active life to which we are commanded, admonished, and by holy zeal impelled to aspire.

LETTER XIX.

(A.D. 390.)

TO GAIUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. WORDS cannot express the pleasure with which the recollection of you filled my heart after I parted with you, and has often filled my heart since then. For I remember that, notwithstanding the amazing ardour which pervaded your inquiries after truth, the bounds of proper moderation in debate were never transgressed by you. I shall not easily find any one who is more eager in putting questions, and at the same time more patient in hearing answers, than you approved yourself. Gladly therefore would I spend much time in converse with you; for the time thus spent, however much it might be, would not seem long. But what avails it to discuss the hindrances on account of which it is difficult for us to enjoy such converse? Enough that it is exceedingly difficult. Perhaps at some future period it may be made very easy; may God grant this! Meanwhile it is otherwise. I have given to the brother by whom I have sent this letter the charge of submitting all my writings to your eminent wisdom and charity, that they may be read by you. For nothing written by me will find in you a reluctant reader; for I know the goodwill which you cherish towards me. Let me say, however, that if, on reading these things, you approve of them, and perceive them to be true, you must not consider them to be mine otherwise than

as given to me; and you are at liberty to turn to that same source whence proceeds also the power given you to appreciate their truth. For no one discerns the truth of that which he reads from anything which is in the mere manuscript, or in the writer, but rather by something within himself, if the light of truth, shining with a clearness beyond what is men's common lot, and very far removed from the darkening influence of the body, has penetrated his own mind. If, however, you discover some things which are false and deserve to be rejected, I would have you know that these things have fallen as dew from the mists of human frailty, and these you are to reckon as truly mine. I would exhort you to persevere in seeking the truth, were it not that I seem to see the mouth of your heart already opened wide to drink it in. I would also exhort you to cling with manly tenacity to the truth which you have learned, were it not that you already manifest in the clearest manner that you possess strength of mind and fixedness of purpose. For all that lives within you has, in the short time of our fellowship, revealed itself to me, almost as if the bodily veil had been rent asunder. And surely the merciful providence of our God can in no wise permit a man so good and so remarkably gifted as you are to be an alien from the flock of Christ.

LETTER XX.

(A.D. 390.)

TO ANTONINUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. As letters are due to you by two of us, a part of our debt is repaid with very abundant usury when you see one of the two in person; and since by his voice you, as it were, hear my own, I might have refrained from writing, had I not been called to do it by the urgent request of the very person whose journey to you seemed to me to make this unnecessary. Accordingly I now hold converse with you even more satisfactorily than if I were personally with you, because you both read my letter, and you listen to the words of one in whose heart you know that I dwell. I have with great joy studied

and pondered the letter sent by your Holiness, because it exhibits both your Christian spirit unsullied by the guile of an evil age, and your heart full of kindly feeling towards myself.

2. I congratulate you, and I give thanks to our God and Lord, because of the hope and faith and love which are in you; and I thank you, in Him, for thinking so well of me as to believe me to be a faithful servant of God, and for the love which with guileless heart you cherish towards that which you commend in me; although, indeed, there is occasion rather for congratulation than for thanks in acknowledging your goodwill in this thing. For it is profitable for yourself that you should love for its own sake that goodness which he of course loves who loves another because he believes him to be good, whether that other be or be not what he is supposed to be. One error only is to be carefully avoided in this matter, that we do not think otherwise than truth demands, not of the individual, but of that which is true goodness in man. But, my brother well-beloved, seeing that you are not in any degree mistaken either in believing or in knowing that the great good for men is to serve God cheerfully and purely, when you love any man because you believe him to share this good, you reap the reward, even though the man be not what you suppose him to be. Wherefore it is fitting that you should on this account be congratulated; but the person whom you love is to be congratulated, not because of his being for that reason loved, but because of his being truly (if it is the case) such an one as the person who for this reason loves him esteems him to be. As to our real character, therefore, and as to the progress we may have made in the divine life, this is seen by Him whose judgment, both as to that which is good in man, and as to each man's personal character, cannot err. For your obtaining the reward of blessedness so far as this matter is concerned, it is sufficient that you embrace me with your whole heart because you believe me to be such a servant of God as I ought to be. To you, however, I also render many thanks for this, that you encourage me wonderfully to aspire after such excellence, by your praising me as if I had already attained it. Many more thanks still shall be yours, if you not only claim an interest in my prayers, but also cease not to pray for me.

For intercession on behalf of a brother is more acceptable to God when it is offered as a sacrifice of love.

3. I greet very kindly your little son, and I pray that he may grow up in the way of obedience to the salutary requirements of God's law. I desire and pray, moreover, that the one true faith and worship, which alone is catholic, may prosper and increase in your house; and if you think any labour on my part necessary for the promotion of this end, do not scruple to claim my service, relying upon Him who is our common Lord, and upon the law of love which we must obey. This especially would I recommend to your pious discretion, that by reading the word of God, and by serious conversation with your partner,[1] you should either plant the seed or foster the growth in her heart of an intelligent fear of God. For it is scarcely possible that any one who is concerned for the soul's welfare, and is therefore without prejudice resolved to know the will of the Lord, should fail, when enjoying the guidance of a good instructor, to discern the difference which exists between every form of schism and the one Catholic Church.

LETTER XXI.

(A.D. 391.)

TO MY LORD BISHOP VALERIUS, MOST BLESSED AND VENERABLE, MY FATHER MOST WARMLY CHERISHED WITH TRUE LOVE IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, AUGUSTINE, PRESBYTER, SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. BEFORE all things I ask your pious wisdom to take into consideration that, on the one hand, if the duties of the office of a bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, be discharged in a perfunctory and time-serving manner, no work can be in this life more easy, agreeable, and likely to secure the favour of men, especially in our day, but none at the same time more miserable, deplorable, and worthy of condemnation in the sight of God; and, on the other hand, that if in the office of bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, the orders of the Captain of our salvation be observed, there is no work in this life more difficult, toil-

[1] Infirmiori vasi tuo.

some, and hazardous, especially in our day, but none at the same time more blessed in the sight of God. But what the proper mode of discharging these duties is, I did not learn either in boyhood or in the earlier years of manhood; and at the time when I was beginning to learn it, I was constrained as a just correction for my sins (for I know not what else to think) to accept the second place at the helm, when as yet I knew not how to handle an oar.

2. But I think that it was the purpose of my Lord hereby to rebuke me, because I presumed, as if entitled by superior knowledge and excellence, to reprove the faults of many sailors before I had learned by experience the nature of their work. Therefore, after I had been sent in among them to share their labours, then I began to feel the rashness of my censures; although even before that time I judged this office to be beset with many dangers. And hence the tears which some of my brethren perceived me shedding in the city at the time of my ordination, and because of which they did their utmost with the best intentions to console me, but with words which, through their not knowing the causes of my sorrow, did not reach my case at all.[1] But my experience has made me realize these things much more both in degree and in measure than I had done in merely thinking of them: not that I have now seen any new waves or storms, of which I had not previous knowledge by observation, or report, or reading, or meditation; but because I had not known my own skill or strength for avoiding or encountering them, and had estimated it to be of some value instead of none. The Lord, however, laughed at me, and was pleased to show me by actual experience what I am.

3. But if He has done this not in judgment, but in mercy, as I confidently hope even now, when I have learned my infirmity, my duty is to study with diligence all the remedies which the Scriptures contain for such a case as mine, and to make it my business by prayer and reading to secure that my soul be endued with the health and vigour necessary for labours so responsible. This I have not yet done, because I have not

[1] They thought Augustine was disappointed at being made only presbyter and not colleague of Valerius as bishop. See Possidius, *Aug. Vita*, c. 4.

had time; for I was ordained at the very time when I was thinking of having, along with others, a season of freedom from all other occupation, that we might acquaint ourselves with the divine Scriptures, and was intending to make such arrangements as would secure unbroken leisure for this great work. Moreover, it is true that I did not at any earlier period know how great was my unfitness for the arduous work which now disquiets and crushes my spirit. But if I have by experience learned what is necessary for a man who ministers to a people in the divine sacraments and word, only to find myself prevented from now obtaining what I have learned that I do not possess, do you bid me perish, father Valerius? Where is your charity? Do you indeed love me? Do you indeed love the Church to which you have appointed me, thus unqualified, to minister? I am well assured that you love both; but you think me qualified, whilst I know myself better; and yet I would not have come to know myself if I had not learned by experience.

4. Perhaps your Holiness replies: I wish to know what is lacking to fit you for your office. The things which I lack are so many, that I could more easily enumerate the things which I have than those which I desire to have. I may venture to say that I know and unreservedly believe the doctrines pertaining to our salvation. But my difficulty is in the question how I am to use this truth in ministering to the salvation of others, seeking what is profitable not for myself alone, but for many, that they may be saved. And perhaps there may be, nay, beyond all question there are, written in the sacred books, counsels by the knowledge and acceptance of which the man of God may so discharge his duties to the Church in the things of God, or at least so keep a conscience void of offence in the midst of ungodly men, whether living or dying, as to secure that that life for which alone humble and meek Christian hearts sigh is not lost. But how can this be done, except, as the Lord Himself tells us, by asking, seeking, knocking, that is, by praying, reading, and weeping? For this I have by the brethren made the request, which in this petition I now renew, that a short time, say till Easter, be granted me by your unfeigned and venerable charity.

5. For what shall I answer to the Lord my Judge? Shall I say, "I was not able to acquire the things of which I stood in need, because I was engrossed wholly with the affairs of the Church"? What if He thus reply: "Thou wicked servant, if property belonging to the Church (in the collection of the fruits of which great labour is expended) were suffering loss under some oppressor, and it was in thy power to do something in defence of her rights at the bar of an earthly judge, wouldst thou not, leaving the field which I have watered with my blood, go to plead the cause with the consent of all, and even with the urgent commands of some? And if the decision given were against the Church, wouldst thou not, in prosecuting an appeal, go across the sea; and would no complaint be heard summoning thee home from an absence of a year or more, because thy object was to prevent another from taking possession of land required not for the souls, but for the bodies of the poor, whose hunger might nevertheless be satisfied in a way much easier and more acceptable to me by my living trees, if these were cultivated with care? Wherefore, then, dost thou allege that thou hadst not time to learn how to cultivate my field?" Tell me, I beseech you, what could I reply? Are you perchance willing that I should say, "The aged Valerius is to blame; for, believing me to be instructed in all things necessary, he declined, with a determination proportioned to his love for me, to give me permission to learn what I had not acquired"?

6. Consider all these things, aged Valerius; consider them, I beseech you, by the goodness and severity of Christ, by His mercy and judgment, by Him who has inspired you with such love for me that I dare not displease you, even when the advantage of my soul is at stake. You, moreover, appeal to God and to Christ to bear witness to me concerning your innocence and charity, and the sincere love which you bear to me, just as if all these were not things about which I may myself willingly take my oath. I therefore appeal to the love and affection which you have thus avouched. Have pity on me, and grant me, for the purpose for which I have asked it, the time which I have asked; and help me with your prayers, that my desire may not be in vain, and that my absence may not be without fruit to the Church of Christ, and

to the profit of my brethren and fellow-servants. I know that the Lord will not despise your love interceding for me, especially in such a cause as this; and accepting it as a sacrifice of sweet savour, He will restore me to you, perhaps, within a period shorter than I have craved, thoroughly furnished for His service by the profitable counsels of His written word.

LETTER XXII.

(A.D. 392.)

TO BISHOP AURELIUS, AUGUSTINE, PRESBYTER, SENDS GREETING.

CHAP. I.—1. When, after long hesitation, I knew not how to frame a suitable reply to the letter of your Holiness (for all attempts to express my feelings were baffled by the strength of affectionate emotions which, rising spontaneously, were by the reading of your letter much more vehemently inflamed), I cast myself at last upon God, that He might, according to my strength, so work in me that I might address to you such an answer as should be suitable to the zeal for the Lord and the care of His Church which we have in common, and in accordance with your dignity and the respect which is due to you from me. And, first of all, as to your belief that you are aided by my prayers, I not only do not decline this assurance, but I do even willingly accept it. For thus, though not through my prayers, assuredly in yours, our Lord will hear me. As to your most benignant approval of the conduct of brother Alypius in remaining in connection with us, to be an example to the brethren who desire to withdraw themselves from this world's cares, I thank you more warmly than words can declare. May the Lord recompense this to your own soul! The whole company, therefore, of brethren which has begun to grow up together beside me, is bound to you by gratitude for this great favour; in bestowing which, you, being far separated from us only by distance on the surface of the earth, have consulted our interest as one in spirit very near to us. Wherefore, to the utmost of our power we give ourselves to prayer that the Lord may be pleased to uphold

along with you the flock which has been committed to you, and may never anywhere forsake you, but be present as your help in all times of need, showing in His dealings with His Church, through your discharge of priestly functions, such mercy as spiritual men with tears and groanings implore Him to manifest.

2. Know, therefore, most blessed lord, venerable for the superlative fulness of your charity, that I do not despair, but rather cherish lively hope that, by means of that authority which you wield, and which, as we trust, has been committed to your spirit, not to your flesh alone, our Lord and God may be able, through the respect due to councils[1] and to yourself, to bring healing to the many carnal blemishes and disorders which the African Church is suffering in the conduct of many, and is bewailing in the sorrow of a few of her members. For whereas the apostle had in one passage briefly set forth as fit to be hated and avoided three classes of vices, from which there springs an innumerable crop of vicious courses, only one of these—that, namely, which he has placed second—is very strictly punished by the Church; but the other two, viz. the first and third, appear to be tolerable in the estimation of men, and so it may gradually come to pass that they shall even cease to be regarded as vices. The words of the chosen vessel are these: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."[2]

3. Of these three, then, chambering and wantonness are regarded as crimes so great, that any one stained with these sins is deemed unworthy not merely of holding office in the Church, but also of participation in the sacraments; and rightly so. But why restrict such censure to this form of sin alone? For rioting and drunkenness are so tolerated and allowed by public opinion, that even in services designed to honour the memory of the blessed martyrs, and this not only on the annual festivals (which itself must be regarded as deplorable by every one who looks with a spiritual eye upon these things), but every day, they are openly practised. Were

[1] We adopt the conjectural reading "conciliorum." Compare sec. 4, p. 53.
[2] Rom. xiii. 13, 14.

this corrupt practice objectionable only because of its being disgraceful, and not on the ground of impiety, we might consider it as a scandal to be tolerated with such amount of forbearance as is within our power. And yet, even in that case, what are we to make of the fact that, when the same apostle had given a long list of vices, among which he mentioned drunkenness, he concluded with the warning that we should not even eat bread with those who are guilty of such things?[1] But let us, if it must be so, bear with these things in the luxury and disorder of families, and of those convivial meetings which are held within the walls of private houses; and let us take the body of Christ in communion with those with whom we are forbidden to eat even the bread which sustains our bodies; but at least let this outrageous insult be kept far away from the tombs of the sainted dead, from the scenes of sacramental privilege, and from the houses of prayer. For who may venture to forbid in private life excesses which, when they are practised by crowds in holy places, are called an honouring of the martyrs?

4. If Africa were the first country in which an attempt were made to put down these things, her example would deserve to be esteemed worthy of imitation by all other countries;[2] but when, both throughout the greater part of Italy and in all or almost all the churches beyond the sea, these practices either, as in some places, never existed, or, as in other places where they did exist, have been, whether they were recent or of long standing, rooted out and put down by the diligence and the censures of bishops who were holy men, entertaining true views concerning the life to come; —when this, I say, is the case, do we hesitate as to the possibility of removing this monstrous defect in our morals, after an example has been set before us in so many lands? Moreover, we have as our bishop a man belonging to those parts, for which we give thanks earnestly to God; although he is a man of such moderation and gentleness, in fine, of such prudence and zeal in the Lord, that even had he been

[1] 1 Cor. v. 11.

[2] Manifestly the correct punctuation here is: Hæc si prima Africa tentaret auferre, a cæteris terris imitatione digna esse deberet.

a native of Africa, the persuasion would have been wrought in him by the Scriptures, that a remedy must be applied to the wound which this loose and disorderly custom has inflicted. But so wide and deep is the plague caused by this wickedness, that, in my opinion, it cannot be completely cured without interposition of a council's authority. If, however, a beginning is to be made by one church, it seems to me, that as it would be presumptuous for any other church to attempt to change what the Church of Carthage still maintained, so would it also be the height of effrontery for any other to wish to persevere in a course which the Church of Carthage had condemned. And for such a reform in Carthage, what better bishop could be desired than the prelate who, while he was a deacon, solemnly denounced these practices?

5. But that over which you then sorrowed you ought now to suppress, not harshly, but as it is written, "in the spirit of meekness."[1] Pardon my boldness, for your letter revealing to me your true brotherly love gives me such confidence, that I am encouraged to speak as freely to you as I would to myself. These offences are taken out of the way, at least in my judgment, by other methods than harshness, severity, and an imperious mode of dealing,—namely, rather by teaching than by commanding, rather by advice than by denunciation.[2] Thus at least we must deal with the multitude; in regard to the sins of a few, exemplary severity must be used. And if we do employ threats, let this be done sorrowfully, supporting our threatenings of coming judgment by the texts of Scripture, so that the fear which men feel through our words may be not of us in our own authority, but of God Himself. Thus an impression shall be made in the first place upon those who are spiritual, or who are nearest to that state of mind; and then by means of the most gentle, but at the same time most importunate exhortations, the opposition of the rest of the multitude shall be broken down.[3]

6. Since, however, these drunken revels and luxurious feasts in the cemeteries are wont to be regarded by the ignorant and

[1] Gal. vi. 1.

[2] Magis monendo quam minando.

[3] One may see in Letter XXIX. how admirably Augustine illustrated in his own practice the directions here given.

carnal multitude as not only an honour to the martyrs, but also a solace to the dead, it appears to me that they might be more easily dissuaded from such scandalous and unworthy practices in these places, if, besides showing that they are forbidden by Scripture, we take care, in regard to the offerings for the spirits of those who sleep, which indeed we are bound to believe to be of some use, that they be not sumptuous beyond what is becoming respect for the memory of the departed, and that they be distributed without ostentation, and cheerfully to all who ask a share of them; also that they be not sold, but that if any one desires to offer any money as a religious act, it be given on the spot to the poor. Thus the appearance of neglecting the memory of their deceased friends, which might cause them no small sorrow of heart, shall be avoided, and that which is a pious and honourable act of religious service shall be celebrated as it should be in the Church. This may suffice meanwhile in regard to rioting and drunkenness.

CHAP. II.—7. As to "strife and deceit,"[1] what right have I to speak, seeing that these vices prevail more seriously among our own order than among our congregations? Let me, however, say that the source of these evils is pride, and a desire for the praises of men, which also frequently produces hypocrisy. This is successfully resisted only by him who is penetrated with love and fear of God, through the multiplied declarations of the divine books; provided, however, that such a man exhibit in himself a pattern both of patience and of humility, by assuming as his due less praise and honour than is offered to him: at the same time neither accepting all nor refusing all that is rendered to him by those who honour him; and as to the portion which he does accept, receiving it not for his own sake, seeing that he ought to live wholly in the sight of God and to despise human applause, but for the sake of those whose welfare he cannot promote if by too great self-abasement he lose his place in their esteem. For to this pertains that word, "Let no man despise thy youth;"[2] while he who said this says also in another place, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."[3]

[1] "De contentione et dolo" is Augustine's translation of the words in Rom. xiii. 13. [2] 1 Tim. iv. 12. [3] Gal. i. 10.

8. It is a great matter not to exult in the honours and praises which come from men, but to reject all vain pomp; and, if some of this be necessary, to make whatever is thus retained contribute to the benefit and salvation of those who confer the honour. For it has not been said in vain, "God will break the bones of those who seek to please men."[1] For what could be feebler, what more destitute of the firmness and strength which the bones here spoken of figuratively represent, than the man who is prostrated by the tongue of slanderers, although he knows that the things spoken against him are false? The pain arising from this thing would in no wise rend the bowels of his soul, if its bones had not been broken by the love of praise. I take for granted your strength of mind: therefore it is to myself that I say those things which I am now stating to you. Nevertheless you are willing, I believe, to consider along with me how important and how difficult these things are. For the man who has not declared war against this enemy has no idea of its power; for if it be comparatively easy to dispense with praise so long as it is denied to him, it is difficult to forbear from being captivated with praise when it is offered. And yet the hanging of our minds upon God ought to be so great, that we would at once correct those with whom we may take that liberty, when we are by them undeservedly praised, so as to prevent them from either thinking us to possess what is not in us, or regarding that as ours which belongs to God, or commending us for things which, though we have them, and perhaps have them in abundance, are nevertheless in their nature not worthy of commendation, such as are all those good things which we have in common with the lower animals or with wicked men. If, however, we are deservedly praised on account of what God has given us, let us congratulate those to whom what is really good yields pleasure; but let us not congratulate ourselves on the fact of our pleasing men, but on the fact of our being (if it is the case) such in the sight of God as we are in their esteem, and because praise is given not to us, but to God, who is the giver of all things which are truly and justly praised. These things are daily repeated to me by myself, or rather by

[1] Ps. lii. 6, Sept.

Him from whom proceed all profitable instructions, whether they are found in the reading of the divine word or are suggested from within to the mind; and yet, although strenuously contending with my adversary, I often receive wounds from him when I am unable to put away from myself the fascinating power of the praise which is offered to me.

9. These things I have written, in order that, if they are not now necessary for your Holiness (your own thoughts suggesting to you other and more useful considerations of this kind, or your Holiness being above the need of such remedies), my disorders at least may be known to you, and you may know that which may move you to deign to plead with God for me as my infirmity demands: and I beseech you, by the humanity of Him who hath commanded us to bear each other's burdens, that you offer such intercession most importunately on my behalf. There are many things in regard to my life and conversation, of which I will not write, which I would confess with tears if we were so situated that nothing was required but my mouth and your ears as the means of communication between my heart and your heart. If, however, the aged Saturninus, venerated by us and beloved by all here with unreserved and unfeigned affection, whose brotherly love and devotion to you I observed when I was with you,—if he, I say, is pleased to visit us so soon as he finds it convenient, whatever converse we may be able to enjoy with that holy and spiritually-minded man shall be esteemed by us very little, if at all, different from personal conference with your Excellency. With entreaties too earnest for words to express their urgency, I beg you to condescend to join us in asking and obtaining from him this favour. For the people of Hippo fear much, and far more than they ought, to let me go to so great a distance from them, and will on no account trust me by myself so far as to permit me to see the field given by your care and generosity to the brethren, of which, before your letter came, we had heard through our brother and fellow-servant Parthenius, from whom we have also learned many other things which we longed to know. The Lord will accomplish the fulfilment of all the other things which we still desiderate.

LETTER XXIII.

(A.D. 392.)

TO MAXIMIN, MY WELL-BELOVED LORD AND BROTHER, WORTHY OF HONOUR, AUGUSTINE, PRESBYTER OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. BEFORE entering on the subject on which I have resolved to write to your Grace, I shall briefly state my reasons for the terms used in the title of this letter, lest these should surprise either yourself or any other person. I have written "to my lord," because it is written: "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."[1] Seeing, therefore, that in this duty of writing to you I am actually by love serving you, I do only what is reasonable in calling you "my lord," for the sake of that one true Lord who gave us this command. Again, as to my having written "well-beloved," God knoweth that I not only love you, but love you as I love myself; for I am well aware that I desire for you the very blessings which I am fain to make my own. As to my adding the words "worthy of honour," I did not mean, by adding this, to say that I honour your episcopal office, for to me you are not a bishop; and this I trust you will take as spoken with no intention to give offence, but from the conviction that in our mouth Yea should be Yea, and Nay, Nay: for neither you nor any one who knows us can fail to know that you are not my bishop, and I am not your presbyter. "Worthy of honour" I therefore willingly call you on this ground, that I know you to be a man; and I know that man was made in the image and likeness of God, and is placed in honour by the very order and law of nature, if by understanding the things which he ought to understand he retain his honour. For it is written, "Man being placed in honour did not understand: he is compared to the brutes devoid of reason, and is made like unto them."[2] Why then may I not address you as worthy of honour, inasmuch as you are a man, especially since I dare not despair of your repentance and salvation so long as

[1] Gal. v. 13. [2] Ps. xlix. 12, version of the LXX.

you are in this life? Moreover, as to my calling you "brother," you are well acquainted with the precept divinely given to us, according to which we are to say, "Ye are our brethren," even to those who deny that they are our brethren; and this has much to do with the reason which has made me resolve to write to you, my brother. Now that the reason for my making such an introduction to my letter has been given, I bespeak your calm attention to what follows.

2. When I was in your district, and was with all my power expressing my abhorrence of the sad and deplorable custom followed by men who, though they boast of the name of Christians, do not hesitate to rebaptize Christians, there were not wanting some who said in praise of you, that you do not conform to this custom. I confess that at first I did not believe them; but afterwards, considering that it was possible for the fear of God to take possession of a human soul exercised in meditation upon the life to come, in such a way as to restrain a man from most manifest wickedness, I believed their statement, rejoicing that by holding such a resolution you showed yourself averse to complete alienation from the Catholic Church. I was even on the outlook for an opportunity of conversing with you, in order that, if it were possible, the small difference which still remained between us might be taken away, when, behold, a few days ago it was reported to me that you had rebaptized a deacon of ours belonging to Mutugenna! I was deeply grieved both for his melancholy fall and for your sin, my brother, which surprised and disappointed me. For I know what the Catholic Church is. The nations are Christ's inheritance, and the ends of the earth are His possession. You also know what the Catholic Church is; or if you do not know it, apply your attention to discern it, for it may be very easily known by those who are willing to be taught. Therefore, to rebaptize even a heretic who has received in baptism the seal of holiness which the practice[1] of the Christian Church has transmitted to us, is unquestionably a sin; but to rebaptize a Catholic is one of the worst of crimes. As I did not, however, believe the report, because I still retained my favourable impression of

[1] Disciplina.

you, I went in person to Mutugenna. The miserable man himself I did not succeed in finding, but I learned from his parents that he had been made one of your deacons. Nevertheless I still think so favourably of you, that I will not believe that he has been rebaptized.

3. Wherefore, my beloved brother, I beseech you, by the divine and human natures of our Lord Jesus Christ, have the kindness to reply to this letter, telling me what has been done, and so to write as knowing that I intend to read your letter aloud to our brethren in the church. This I have written, lest, by afterwards doing that which you did not expect me to do, I should give offence to your Charity, and give you occasion for making a just complaint against me to our common friends. What can reasonably prevent you from answering this letter I do not see. For if you do rebaptize, you have nothing to apprehend from your colleagues when you write that you are doing that which they would command you to do even if you were unwilling; and if you, moreover, defend this by the best arguments known to you, as a thing which ought to be done, your colleagues, so far from being displeased on this account, will praise you. But if you do not rebaptize, hold fast your Christian liberty, my brother Maximin; hold it fast, I implore you: fixing your eye on Christ, fear not the censure, tremble not before the power of any man. Fleeting is the honour of this world, and fleeting are all the objects to which earthly ambition aspires. Neither thrones ascended by flights of steps,[1] nor canopied pulpits,[2] nor processions and chantings of crowds of consecrated virgins, shall be admitted as available for the defence of those who have now these honours, when at the judgment-seat of Christ conscience shall begin to lift its accusing voice, and He who is the Judge of the consciences of men shall pronounce the final sentence. What is here esteemed an honour shall then be a burden: what uplifts men here, shall weigh heavily on them in that day. Those things which meanwhile are done for the Church's welfare as tokens of respect to us, shall then be vindicated, it may be, by a conscience void of offence; but they will avail nothing as a screen for a guilty conscience.

[1] Absidæ gradatæ. [2] Cathedræ velatæ.

4. If, then, it be indeed the case that, under the promptings of a devout and pious mind, you abstain from dispensing a second baptism, and rather accept the baptism of the Catholic Church as the act of the one true Mother, who to all nations both offers a welcome to her bosom, that they may be regenerated, and gives a mother's nourishment to them when they are regenerated, and as the token of admission into Christ's one possession, which reaches to the ends of the earth; if, I say, you indeed do this, why do you not break forth into a joyful and independent confession of your sentiments? Why do you hide under a bushel the lamp which might so profitably shine? Why do you not rend and cast from you the old sordid livery of your craven-hearted bondage, and go forth clad in the panoply of Christian boldness, saying, "I know but one baptism consecrated and sealed with the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost: this sacrament, wherever I find it, I am bound to acknowledge and approve; I do not destroy what I discern to be my Lord's; I do not treat with dishonour the banner of my King"? Even the men who parted the raiment of Christ among them did not rudely rend in pieces the seamless robe;[1] and they were men who had not then any faith in Christ's resurrection; nay, they were witnessing His death. If, then, persecutors forbore from rending the vesture of Christ when He was hanging upon the cross, why should Christians destroy the sacrament of His institution now when He is sitting in heaven upon His throne? Had I been a Jew in the time of that ancient people, when there was nothing better that I could be, I would undoubtedly have received circumcision. That "seal of the righteousness which is by faith" was of so great importance in that dispensation before it was abrogated[2] by the Lord's coming, that the angel would have strangled the infant-child of Moses, had not the child's mother, seizing a stone, circumcised the child, and by this sacrament averted impending death.[3] This sacrament also arrested the waters of the Jordan, and made

[1] John xix. 24.

[2] Evacuaretur.

[3] Ex. iv. 24, 25. Augustine believes that the angel sought to slay, not Moses, but the child; for which he gives reasons in his *Quæstiones in Exodum*. See Rosenmüller, *Scholia*.

them flow back towards their source. This sacrament the Lord Himself received in infancy, although He abrogated it when He was crucified. For these signs of spiritual blessings were not condemned, but gave place to others which were more suitable to the later dispensation. For as circumcision was abolished by the first coming of the Lord, so baptism shall be abolished by His second coming. For as now, since the liberty of faith has come, and the yoke of bondage has been removed, no Christian receives circumcision in the flesh; so then, when the just are reigning with the Lord, and the wicked have been condemned, no one shall be baptized, but the reality which both ordinances prefigure—namely, circumcision of the heart and cleansing of the conscience—shall be eternally abiding. If, therefore, I had been a Jew in the time of the former dispensation, and there had come to me a Samaritan who was willing to become a Jew, abandoning the error which the Lord Himself condemned when He said, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews;"[1]—if, I say, a Samaritan whom Samaritans had circumcised had expressed his willingness to become a Jew, there would have been no scope for the boldness which would have insisted on the repetition of the rite; and instead of this, we would have been compelled to approve of that which God had commanded, although it had been done by heretics. But if, in the flesh of a circumcised man, I could not find place for the repetition of the circumcision, because there is but one member which is circumcised, much less is place found in the one heart of man for the repetition of the baptism of Christ. Ye, therefore, who wish to baptize twice, must seek as subjects of such double baptism men who have double hearts.

5. Publish frankly, therefore, that you are doing what is right, if it be the case that you do not rebaptize; and write me to that effect, not only without fear, but with joy. Let no Councils of your party deter you, my brother, from this step: for if this displease them, they are not worthy to have you among them; but if it please them, we trust that there shall soon be peace between you and us, through the mercy of our Lord, who never forsakes those who fear to displease Him,

[1] John iv. 22.

and who labour to do what is acceptable in His sight; and let not our honours—a dangerous burden, of which an account must yet be given—be a hindrance, making it unhappily impossible for our people who believe in Christ, and who share with one another in daily bread at home, to sit down at the same table of Christ. Do we not grievously lament that husband and wife do in most cases, when marriage makes them one flesh, vow mutual fidelity in the name of Christ, and yet rend asunder Christ's own body by belonging to separate communions? If, by your moderate measures and wisdom, and by your exercise of that love which we all owe to Him who shed His blood for us, this schism, which is such a grievous scandal, causing Satan to triumph and many souls to perish, be taken out of the way in these parts, who can adequately express how illustrious is the reward which the Lord prepares for you, in that from you should proceed an example which, if imitated, as it may so easily be, would bring health to all His other members, which throughout the whole of Africa are lying now miserably exhausted? How much I fear lest, since you cannot see my heart, I appear to you to speak rather in irony than in the sincerity of love! But what more can I do than present my words before your eye, and my heart before God?

6. Let us put away from between us those vain objections which are wont to be thrown at each other by the ignorant on either side. Do not on your part cast up to me the persecutions of Macarius. I, on mine, will not reproach you with the excesses of the Circumcelliones. If you are not to blame for the latter, neither am I for the former; they pertain not to us. The Lord's floor is not yet purged—it cannot be without chaff; be it ours to pray, and to do what in us lies that we may be good grain. I could not pass over in silence the rebaptizing of our deacon; for I know how much harm my silence might do to myself. For I do not propose to spend my time in the empty enjoyment of ecclesiastical dignity; but I propose to act as mindful of this, that to the one Chief Shepherd I must give account of the sheep committed unto me. If you would rather that I should not thus write to you, you must, my brother, excuse me on the ground of my fears; for

I do fear greatly, lest, if I were silent and concealed my sentiments, others might be rebaptized by you. I have resolved, therefore, with such strength and opportunity as the Lord may grant, so to manage this discussion, that by our peaceful conferences, all who belong to our communion may know how far apart from heresy and schism is the position of the Catholic Church, and with what care they should guard against the destruction which awaits the tares and the branches cut off from the Lord's vine. If you willingly accede to such conference with me, by consenting to the public reading of the letters of both, I shall unspeakably rejoice. If this proposal is displeasing to you, what can I do, my brother, but read our letters, even without your consent, to the Catholic congregation, with a view to its instruction? But if you do not condescend to write me a reply, I am resolved at least to read my own letter, that, when your misgivings as to your procedure are known, others may be ashamed to be rebaptized.

7. I shall not, however, do this in the presence of the soldiery, lest any of you should think that I wish to act in a violent way, rather than as the interests of peace demand; but only after their departure, that all who hear me may understand, that I do not propose to compel men to embrace the communion of any party, but desire the truth to be made known to persons who, in their search for it, are free from disquieting apprehensions. On our side there shall be no appeal to men's fear of the civil power; on your side, let there be no intimidation by a mob of Circumcelliones. Let us attend to the real matter in debate, and let our arguments appeal to reason and to the authoritative teaching of the Divine Scriptures, dispassionately and calmly, so far as we are able; let us ask, seek, and knock, that we may receive and find, and that to us the door may be opened, and thereby may be achieved, by God's blessing on our united efforts and prayers, the first step towards the entire removal from our district of that impiety which is such a disgrace to Africa. If you do not believe that I am willing to postpone the discussion until after the soldiery have left, you may delay your answer until they have gone; and if, while they are still here, I should wish to read my own letter to the people, the production of the

letter will of itself convict me of breaking my word. May the Lord in His mercy prevent me from acting in a way so contrary to morality, and to the good resolutions with which, by laying His yoke on me, He has been pleased to inspire me!

8. My bishop would perhaps have preferred to send a letter himself to your Grace, if he had been here; or my letter would have been written, if not by his order, at least with his sanction. But in his absence, seeing that the rebaptizing of this deacon is said to have occurred recently, I have not, by delay allowed the feelings caused by the action to cool down, being moved by the promptings of the keenest anguish on account of what I regard as really the death of a brother. This my grief the compensating joy of reconciliation between us and you may perhaps be appointed to heal, through the help of the mercy and providence of our Lord. May the Lord our God grant thee a calm and conciliatory spirit, my dearly beloved lord and brother!

LETTER XXIV.

THIS letter, written in 394 to Alypius by Paulinus, owes its place in the collection of Augustine's letters to the notice of the treatises written by Augustine against the Manichæans, and its connection with the following letter addressed by Paulinus to Augustine himself. It is obviously one of those which, in making a selection of letters, may be safely omitted.

LETTER XXV.

(A.D. 394.)

TO AUGUSTINE, OUR LORD AND BROTHER BELOVED AND VENERABLE, FROM PAULINUS AND THERASIA, SINNERS.

1. THE love of Christ which constrains us, and which unites us, though separated by distance, in the bond of a common faith, has itself emboldened me to dismiss my fear and address a letter to you; and it has given you a place in my inmost heart by means of your writings—so full of the stores of learning, so sweet with celestial honey, the medicine and the

nourishment of my soul. These I at present have in five books, which, through the kindness of our blessed and venerable Bishop Alypius, I received, not only as a means of my own instruction, but for the use of the Church in many towns. These books I am now reading: in them I take great delight: in them I find food, not that which perisheth, but that which imparts the substance of eternal life through our faith, whereby we are in our Lord Jesus Christ made members of His body; for the writings and examples of the faithful do greatly strengthen that faith which, not looking at things seen, longs after things not seen with that love which accepts implicitly all things which are according to the truth of the omnipotent God. O true salt of the earth, by which our hearts are preserved from being corrupted by the errors of the world! O light worthy of your place on the candlestick of the Church, diffusing widely in the Catholic towns the brightness of a flame fed by the oil of the seven-branched lamp of the upper sanctuary, you also disperse even the thick mists of heresy, and rescue the light of truth from the confusion of darkness by the beams of your luminous demonstrations.

2. You see, my brother beloved, esteemed, and welcomed in Christ our Lord, with what intimacy I claim to know you, with what amazement I admire and with what love I embrace you, seeing that I enjoy daily converse with you by the medium of your writings, and am fed by the breath of your mouth. For your mouth I may justly call a pipe conveying living water, and a channel from the eternal fountain; for Christ has become in you a fountain of "living water springing up into eternal life."[1] Through desire for this my soul thirsted within me, and my parched ground longed to be flooded with the fulness of your river. Since, therefore, you have armed me completely by this your Pentateuch against the Manichæans, if you have prepared any treatises in defence of the Catholic faith against other enemies (for our enemy, with his thousand pernicious stratagems, must be defeated by weapons as various as the artifices by which he assails us), I beg you to bring these forth from your armoury for me, and not refuse to furnish me with the "armour of righteousness."

[1] John iv. 14.

For I am oppressed even now in my work with a heavy burden, being, as a sinner, a veteran in the ranks of sinners, but an untrained recruit in the service of the King eternal. The wisdom of this world I have unhappily hitherto regarded with admiration, and, devoting myself to literature which I now see to be unprofitable, and wisdom which I now reject, I was in the sight of God foolish and dumb. When I had become old in the fellowship of my enemies, and had laboured in vain in my thoughts, I lifted mine eyes to the mountains, looking up to the precepts of the law and to the gifts of grace, whence my help came from the Lord, who, not requiting me according to mine iniquity, enlightened my blindness, loosed my bonds, humbled me who had been sinfully exalted, in order that He might exalt me when graciously humbled.

3. Therefore I follow, with halting pace indeed as yet, the great examples of the just, if I may through your prayers apprehend that for which I have been apprehended by the compassion of God. Guide, therefore, this infant creeping on the ground, and by your steps teach him to walk. For I would not have you judge of me by the age which began with my natural birth, but by that which began with my spiritual new birth. For as to the natural life, my age is that which the cripple, healed by the apostles by the power of their word at the gate Beautiful, had attained.[1] But with respect to the birth of my soul, mine is as yet the age of those infants who, being sacrificed by the death-blows which were aimed at Christ, preceded with blood worthy of such honour the offering of the Lamb, and were the harbingers of the passion of the Lord.[2] Therefore, as I am but a babe in the word of God, and as to spiritual age a sucking child, satisfy my vehement desire by nourishing me with your words, the breasts of faith, and wisdom, and love. If you consider only the office which we both hold, you are my brother; but if you consider the ripeness of your understanding and other powers, you are, though my junior in years, a father to me; because the possession of a venerable wisdom has promoted you, though young, to a maturity of worth, and to the honour which belongs to those who are old. Foster and strengthen me,

[1] Acts iii. 7 and iv. 22. [2] Matt. ii. 16.

then, for I am, as I have said, but a child in the sacred Scriptures and in spiritual studies; and seeing that, after long contendings and frequent shipwreck, I have but little skill, and am even now with difficulty rising above the waves of this world, do you, who have already found firm footing on the shore, receive me into the safe refuge of your bosom, that, if it please you, we may together sail towards the harbour of salvation. Meanwhile, in my efforts to escape from the dangers of this life and the abyss of sin, support me by your prayers, as by a plank, that from this world I may escape as one does from a shipwreck, leaving all behind.

4. I have therefore been at pains to rid myself of all baggage and garments which might impede my progress, in order that, obedient to the command and sustained by the help of Christ, I may swim, unhindered by any clothing for the flesh or care for the morrow, across the sea of this present life, which, swelling with waves and echoing with the barking of our sins, like the dogs of Scylla, separates between us and God. I do not boast that I have accomplished this: even if I might so boast, I would glory only in the Lord, whose it is to accomplish what it is our part to desire; but my soul is in earnest that the judgments of the Lord be her chief desire. You can judge how far he is on the way to efficiently performing the will of God, who is desirous that he may desire to perform it. Nevertheless, so far as in me lies, I have loved the beauty of His sanctuary, and, if left to myself, would have chosen to occupy the lowest place in the Lord's house. But to Him who was pleased to separate me from my mother's womb, and to draw me away from the friendship of flesh and blood to His grace, it has seemed good to raise me from the earth and from the gulf of misery, though destitute of all merit, and to take me from the mire and from the dunghill, to set me among the princes of His people, and appoint my place in the same rank with yourself; so that, although you excel me in worth, I should be associated with you as your equal in office.

5. It is not therefore by my own presumption, but in accordance with the pleasure and appointment of the Lord, that I appropriate the honour of which I own myself unworthy,

claiming for myself the bond of brotherhood with you; for I am persuaded, from the holiness of your character, that you are taught by the truth "not to mind high things, but to condescend to men of low estate." Therefore I hope that you will readily and kindly accept the assurance of the love which in humility we bear to you, and which, I trust, you have already received through the most blessed priest Alypius, whom (with his permission) we call our father. For he doubtless has himself given you an example of loving us both while we are yet strangers, and above our desert; for he has found it possible, in the spirit of far-reaching and self-diffusing genuine love, to behold us by affection, and to come in contact with us by writing, even when we were unknown to him, and severed by a wide interval both of land and sea. He has presented us with the first proofs of his affection to us, and evidences of your love, in the above-mentioned gift of books. And as he was greatly concerned that we should be constrained to ardent love for you, when known to us, not by his testimony alone, but more fully by the eloquence and the faith seen in your own writings; so do we believe that he has taken care, with equal zeal, to bring you to imitate his example in cherishing a very warm love towards us in return. O brother in Christ, beloved, venerable, and ardently longed for, we desire that the grace of God, as it is with you, may abide for ever. We salute, with the utmost affection of cordial brotherhood, your whole household, and every one who is in the Lord a companion and imitator of your holiness. We beg you to bless, in accepting it, one loaf which we have sent to your Charity, in token of our oneness of heart with you.

LETTER XXVI.

(A.D. 395.)

TO LICENTIUS[1] FROM AUGUSTINE.

1. I HAVE with difficulty found an opportunity for writing to

[1] Licentius, son of Romanianus, had been a pupil of Augustine when he was in retirement at Cassiacum. In this letter and in the next we see proofs of Augustine's pious solicitude for his welfare.

you: who would believe it? Yet Licentius must take my word for it. I do not wish you to search curiously for the causes and reasons of this; for though they could be given, your confidence in me acquits me of obligation to furnish them. Moreover, I received your letters by messengers who were not available for the carrying back of my reply. And as to the thing which you asked me to ask, I attended to it by letter as far as it seemed to me right to bring it forward; but with what result you may have seen. If I have not yet succeeded, I will press the matter more earnestly, either when the result comes to my knowledge, or when you yourself remind me of it. Thus far I have spoken to you of the things in which we hear the sound of the chains of this life. I pass from them. Receive now in a few words the utterance of my heart's anxieties concerning your hope for eternity, and the question how a way may be opened for you to God.

2. I fear, my dear Licentius, that you, while repeatedly rejecting and dreading the restraints of wisdom, as if these were bonds, are becoming firmly and fatally in bondage to mortal things. For wisdom, though at first it restrains men, and subdues them by some labours in the way of discipline, gives them presently true freedom, and enriches them, when free, with the possession and enjoyment of itself; and though at first it educates them by the help of temporary restraints, it folds them afterwards in its eternal embrace, the sweetest and strongest of all conceivable bonds. I admit, indeed, that these initial restraints are somewhat hard to bear; but the ultimate restraints of wisdom I cannot call grievous, because they are most sweet; nor can I call them easy, because they are most firm: in short, they possess a quality which cannot be described, but which can be the object of faith, and hope, and love. The bonds of this world, on the other hand, have a real harshness and a delusive charm, certain pain and uncertain pleasure, hard toil and troubled rest, an experience full of misery, and a hope devoid of happiness. And are you submitting neck and hands and feet to these chains, desiring to be burdened with honours of this kind, reckoning your labours to be in vain if they are not thus rewarded, and spontaneously aspiring to become fixed in that to which neither persuasion

nor force ought to have induced you to go? Perhaps you answer, in the words of the slave in Terence,

"So ho, you are pouring out wise words here."

Receive my words, then, that I may pour them out without wasting them. But if I sing, while you prefer to dance to another tune, even thus I do not regret my effort to give advice; for the exercise of singing yields pleasure even when the song fails to stir to responsive motion the person for whom it is sung with loving care. There were in your letters some verbal mistakes which attracted my attention, but I judge it trifling to discuss these when solicitude about your actions and your whole life disturbs me.

4. If your verses were marred by defective arrangement, or violated the laws of prosody, or grated on the ears of the hearer by imperfect rhythm, you would doubtless be ashamed, and you would lose no time, you would take no rest, until you arranged, corrected, remodelled, and balanced your composition, devoting any amount of earnest study and toil to the acquisition and practice of the art of versification: but when you yourself are marred by disorderly living, when you violate the laws of God, when your life accords neither with the honourable desires of friends on your behalf, nor with the light given by your own learning, do you think this is a trifle to be cast out of sight and out of mind? As if, forsooth, you thought yourself of less value than the sound of your own voice, and esteemed it a smaller matter to displease God by ill-ordered life, than to provoke the censure of grammarians by ill-ordered syllables.

You write thus: "Oh that the morning light of other days could with its gladdening chariot bring back to me bright hours that are gone, which we spent together in the heart of Italy and among the high mountains, when proving the generous leisure and pure privileges which belong to the good! Neither stern winter with its frozen snow, nor the rude blasts of Zephyrs and raging of Boreas, could deter me from following your footsteps with eager tread. You have only to express your wish."[1]

Woe be to me if I do not express this wish, nay, if I do not compel and command, or beseech and implore you to follow me. If, however, your ear is shut against my voice, let it be

[1] Extract from a long poem, by Licentius, forming § 3 of the text.

open to your own voice, and give heed to your own poem: listen to yourself, O friend, most unyielding, unreasonable, and unimpressible. What care I for your tongue of gold, while your heart is of iron? How shall I, not in verses, but in lamentations, sufficiently bewail these verses of yours, in which I discover what a soul, what a mind that is which I am not permitted to seize and present as an offering to our God? You are waiting for me to express the wish that you should become good, and enjoy rest and happiness: as if any day could shine more pleasantly on me than that in which I shall enjoy in God your gifted mind, or as if you did not know how I hunger and thirst for you, or as if you did not in this poem itself confess this. Return to the mind in which you wrote these things; say to me now again, "You have only to express your wish." Here then is my wish, if my expression of it be enough to move you to comply: Give yourself to me—give yourself to my Lord, who is the Lord of us both, and who has endowed you with your faculties: for what am I but through Him your servant, and under Him your fellow-servant?

5. Nay, has not He given expression to His will? Hear the gospel: it declares, "Jesus stood and cried."[1] "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: so shall ye find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."[2] If these words are not heard, or are heard only with the ear, do you, Licentius, expect Augustine to issue his command to his fellow-servant, and not rather complain that the will of his Lord is despised, when He orders, nay invites, and as it were entreats all who labour to seek rest in Him? But to your strong and proud neck, forsooth, the yoke of the world seems easier than the yoke of Christ; yet consider, in regard to the yoke which He imposes, by whom and with what recompense it is imposed. Go to Campania, learn in the case of Paulinus, that eminent and holy servant of God, how great worldly honours he shook off, without hesitation, from neck truly noble because humble, in order that he might place it, as he has done, beneath the yoke of Christ; and now, with his mind at rest, he meekly rejoices in

[1] John vii. 37. [2] Matt. xi. 28-30.

Him as the guide of his way. Go, learn with what wealth of mind he offers to Him the sacrifice of praise, rendering unto Him all the good which he has received from Him, lest, by failing to store all that he has in Him from whom he received it, he should lose it all.

6. Why are you so excited? why so wavering? why do you turn your ear away from us, and lend it to the imaginations of fatal pleasures? They are false, they perish, and they lead to perdition. They are false, Licentius. "May the truth," as you desire, "be made plain to us by demonstration, may it flow more clear than Eridanus." The truth alone declares what is true: Christ is the truth; let us come to Him that we may be released from labour. That He may heal us, let us take His yoke upon us, and learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and we shall find rest unto our souls: for His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. The devil desires to wear you as an ornament. Now, if you found in the earth a golden chalice, you would give it to the Church of God. But you have received from God talents that are spiritually valuable as gold; and do you devote these to the service of your lusts, and surrender yourself to Satan? Do it not, I entreat you. May you at some time perceive with what a sad and sorrowful heart I have written these things; and I pray you, have pity on me if you have ceased to be precious in your own eyes.

LETTER XXVII.

(A.D. 395.)

TO MY LORD, HOLY AND VENERABLE, AND WORTHY OF HIGHEST PRAISE IN CHRIST, MY BROTHER PAULINUS, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. O EXCELLENT man and excellent brother, there was a time when you were unknown to my mind; and I charge my mind to bear patiently your being still unknown to my eyes, but it almost—nay, altogether—refuses to obey. Does it indeed bear this patiently? If so, why then does a longing for your presence rack my inmost soul? For if I were suffering bodily infirmities, and these did not interrupt the serenity of my

mind, I might be justly said to bear them patiently; but when I cannot bear with equanimity the privation of not seeing you, it would be intolerable were I to call my state of mind patience. Nevertheless, it would perhaps be still more intolerable if I were to be found patient while absent from you, seeing that you are such an one as you are. It is well, therefore, that I am unsatisfied under a privation which is such that, if I were satisfied under it, every one would justly be dissatisfied with me. What has befallen me is strange, yet true: I grieve because I do not see you, and my grief itself comforts me; for I neither admire nor covet a fortitude easily consoled under the absence of good men such as you are. For do we not long for the heavenly Jerusalem? and the more impatiently we long for it, do we not the more patiently submit to all things for its sake? Who can so withhold himself from joy in seeing you, as to feel no pain when you are no longer seen? I at least can do neither; and seeing that if I could, it could only be by trampling on right and natural feeling, I rejoice that I cannot, and in this rejoicing I find some consolation. It is therefore not the removal, but the contemplation, of this sorrow that consoles me. Blame me not, I beseech you, with that devout seriousness of spirit which so eminently distinguishes you; say not that I do wrong to grieve because of my not yet knowing you, when you have disclosed to my sight your mind, which is the inner man. For if, when sojourning in any place, or in the city to which you belong, I had come to know you as my brother and friend, and as one so eminent as a Christian, so noble as a man, how could you think that it would be no disappointment to me if I were not permitted to know your dwelling? How, then, can I but mourn because I have not yet seen your face and form, the dwelling-place of that mind which I have come to know as if it were my own?

2. For I have read your letter, which flows with milk and honey, which exhibits the simplicity of heart wherewith, under the guidance of piety, you seek the Lord, and which brings glory and honour to Him. The brethren have read it also, and find unwearied and ineffable satisfaction in those abundant and excellent gifts with which God has endowed you. As

many as have read it carry it away with them, because, while they read, it carries them away. Words cannot express how sweet is the savour of Christ which your letter breathes. How strong is the wish to be more fully acquainted with you which that letter awakens by presenting you to our sight! for it at once permits us to discern and prompts us to desire you. For the more effectually that it makes us in a certain sense realize your presence, the more does it render us impatient under your absence. All love you as seen therein, and wish to be loved by you. Praise and thanksgiving are offered to God, by whose grace you are what you are. In your letter, Christ is awakened that He may be pleased to calm the winds and the waves for you, directing your steps towards His perfect stedfastness.[1] In it the reader beholds a wife[2] who does not bring her husband to effeminacy, but by union to him is brought herself to share the strength of his nature; and unto her in you, as completely one with you, and bound to you by spiritual ties which owe their strength to their purity, we desire to return our salutations with the respect due to your Holiness. In it, the cedars of Lebanon, levelled to the ground, and fashioned by the skilful craft of love into the form of the Ark, cleave the waves of this world, fearless of decay. In it, glory is scorned that it may be secured, and the world given up that it may be gained. In it, the little ones, yea, the mightier sons of Babylon, the sins of turbulence and pride, are dashed against the rock.

3. These and other such most delightful and hallowed spectacles are presented to the readers of your letter,—that letter which exhibits a true faith, a good hope, a pure love. How it breathes to us your thirst, your longing and fainting for the courts of the Lord! With what holy love it is inspired! How it overflows with the abundant treasure of a true heart! What thanksgivings it renders to God! What blessings it procures from Him! Is it elegance or fervour, light or life-giving power, which shines most in your letter? For how can it at once soothe us and animate us? how can it combine fertilizing rains with the brightness of a cloudless sky? How is this? I ask; or how shall I repay you, except

[1] Compare end of sec. 3 in Letter XXV. p. 67. [2] Therasia.

by giving myself to be wholly yours in Him whose you wholly are? If this be little, it is at least all I have to give. But you have made me think it not little, by your deigning to honour me in that letter with such praises, that when I requite you by giving myself to you, I would be chargeable if I counted the gift a small one, with refusing to believe your testimony. I am ashamed, indeed, to believe so much good spoken of myself, but I am yet more unwilling to refuse to believe you. I have one way of escape from the dilemma: I shall not credit your estimate of my character, because I do not recognise myself in the portrait you have drawn; but I shall believe myself to be beloved by you, because I perceive and feel this beyond all doubt. Thus I shall be found neither rash in judging of myself, nor ungrateful for your esteem. Moreover, when I offer myself to you, it is not a small offering; for I offer one whom you very warmly love, and one who, though he is not what you suppose him to be, is nevertheless one for whom you are praying that he may become such. And your prayers I now beg the more earnestly, lest, thinking me to be already what I am not, you should be less solicitous for the supply of that which I lack.

4. The bearer of this letter[1] to your Excellency and most eminent Charity is one of my dearest friends, and most intimately known to me from early years. His name is mentioned in the treatise *De Religione*, which your Holiness, as you indicate in your letter, has read with very great pleasure, doubtless because it was made more acceptable to you by the recommendation of so good a man as he who sent it to you.[2] I would not wish you, however, to give credence to the statements which, perchance, one who is so intimately my friend may have made in praise of me. For I have often observed, that, without intending to say what was untrue, he was, by the bias of friendship, mistaken in his opinion concerning me, and that he thought me to be already possessed of many things, for the gift of which my heart earnestly waited on the Lord. And if he did such things in my presence, who may not conjecture that out of the fulness of his heart he may utter many things more excellent than true concerning me when

[1] Romanianus. See *De Religione*, ch. vii. n. 12. [2] Alypius.

absent? He will submit to your esteemed attention, and review all my treatises; for I am not aware of having written anything, either addressed to those who are beyond the pale of the Church, or to the brethren, which is not in his possession. But when you are reading these, my holy Paulinus, let not those things which Truth has spoken by my weak instrumentality, so carry you away as to prevent your carefully observing what I myself have spoken, lest, while you drink in with eagerness the things good and true which have been given to me as a servant, you should forget to pray for the pardon of my errors and mistakes. For in all that shall, if observed, justly displease you, I myself am seen; but in all which in my books is justly approved by you, through the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed on you, He is to be loved, He is to be praised, with whom is the fountain of life, and in whose light we shall see light,[1] not darkly as we do here, but face to face.[2] When, in reading over my writings, I discover in them anything which is due to the working of the old leaven in me, I blame myself for it with true sorrow; but if anything which I have spoken is, by God's gift, from the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, I rejoice therein with trembling. For what have we that we have not received? Yet it may be said, his portion is better whom God has endowed with larger and more numerous gifts, than his on whom smaller and fewer have been conferred. True; but, on the other hand, it is better to have a small gift, and to render to Him due thanks for it, than, having a large gift, to wish to claim the merit of it as our own. Pray for me, my brother, that I may make such acknowledgments sincerely, and that my heart may not be at variance with my tongue. Pray, I beseech you, that, not coveting praise to myself, but rendering praise to the Lord, I may worship Him; and I shall be safe from mine enemies.

5. There is yet another thing which may move you to love more warmly the brother who bears my letter; for he is a kinsman of the venerable and truly blessed bishop Alypius, whom you love with your whole heart, and justly: for whoever thinks highly of that man, thinks highly of the great

[1] Ps. xxxvi. 10. [2] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

mercy and wonderful gifts which God has bestowed on him. Accordingly, when he had read your request, desiring him to write for you a sketch of his history, and, while willing to do it because of your kindness, was yet unwilling to do it because of his humility, I, seeing him unable to decide between the respective claims of love and humility, transferred the burden from his shoulders to my own, for he enjoined me by letter to do so. I shall therefore, with God's help, soon place in your heart Alypius just as he is: for this I chiefly feared, that he would be afraid to declare all that God has conferred on him, lest (since what he writes would be read by others besides you) he should seem to any who are less competent to discriminate to be commending not God's goodness bestowed on men, but his own merits; and that thus you, who know what construction to put on such statements, would, through his regard for the infirmity of others, be deprived of that which to you as a brother ought to be imparted. This I would have done already, and you would already be reading my description of him, had not my brother suddenly resolved to set out earlier than we expected. For him I bespeak a welcome from your heart and from your lips as kindly as if your acquaintance with him was not beginning now, but of as long standing as my own. For if he does not shrink from laying himself open to your heart, he will be in great measure, if not completely, healed by your lips; for I desire him to be often made to hear the words of those who cherish for their friends a higher love than that which is of this world.

6. Even if Romanianus had not been going to visit your Charity, I had resolved to recommend to you by letter his son [Licentius], dear to me as my own (whose name you will find also in some of my books), in order that he may be encouraged, exhorted, and instructed, not so much by the sound of your voice, as by the example of your spiritual strength. I desire earnestly, that while his life is yet in the green blade, the tares may be turned into wheat, and he may believe those who know by experience the dangers to which he is eager to expose himself. From the poem of my young friend, and my letter to him, your most benevolent and considerate wisdom

may perceive my grief, fear, and care on his account. I am not without hope that, by the Lord's favour, I may through your means be set free from such disquietude regarding him.

As you are now about to read much that I have written, your love will be much more gratefully esteemed by me, if, moved by compassion, and judging impartially, you correct and reprove whatever displeases you. For you are not one whose oil anointing my head would make me afraid.[1]

The brethren, not those only who dwell with us, and those who, dwelling elsewhere, serve God in the same way as we do, but almost all who are in Christ our warm friends, send you salutations, along with the expression of their veneration and affectionate longing for you as a brother, as a saint, and as a man.[2] I dare not ask; but if you have any leisure from ecclesiastical duties, you may see for what favour all Africa, with myself, is thirsting.

LETTER XXVIII.

(A.D. 394 OR 395.)

TO JEROME, HIS MOST BELOVED LORD, AND BROTHER AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER, WORTHY OF BEING HONOURED AND EMBRACED WITH THE SINCEREST AFFECTIONATE DEVOTION, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

CHAP. I. 1. Never was the face of any one more familiar to another, than the peaceful, happy, and truly noble diligence of your studies in the Lord has become to me. For although I long greatly to be acquainted with you, I feel that already my knowledge of you is deficient in respect of nothing but a very small part of you,—namely, your personal appearance; and even as to this, I cannot deny that since my most blessed brother Alypius (now invested with the office of bishop, of which he was then truly worthy) has seen you, and has on his

[1] The reference is to Ps. cxli. 5, the words of which, translated from the LXX. version, are given in full in the succeeding letter.

[2] This may approximate to a translation of the three titles in the original, "Germanitas, Beatitudo, Humanitas tua."

return been seen by me, it has been almost completely imprinted on my mind by his report of you; nay, I may say that before his return, when he saw you there, I was seeing you myself with his eyes. For any one who knows us may say of him and me, that in body only, and not in mind, we are two, so great is the union of heart, so firm the intimate friendship subsisting between us; though in merit we are not alike, for his is far above mine. Seeing, therefore, that you love me, both of old through the communion of spirit by which we are knit to each other, and more recently through what you know of me from the mouth of my friend, I feel that it is not presumptuous in me (as it would be in one wholly unknown to you) to recommend to your brotherly esteem the brother Profuturus, in whom we trust that the happy omen of his name (Good-speed) may be fulfilled through our efforts furthered after this by your aid; although, perhaps, it may be presumptuous on this ground, that he is so great a man, that it would be much more fitting that I should be commended to you by him, than he by me. I ought perhaps to write no more, if I were willing to content myself with the style of a formal letter of introduction; but my mind overflows into conference with you, concerning the studies with which we are occupied in Christ Jesus our Lord, who is pleased to furnish us largely through your love with many benefits, and some helps by the way, in the path which He has pointed out to His followers.

CHAP. II. 2. We therefore, and with us all that are devoted to study in the African churches, beseech you not to refuse to devote care and labour to the translation of the books of those who have written in the Greek language most able commentaries on our Scriptures. You may thus put us also in possession of these men, and especially of that one whose name you seem to have singular pleasure in sounding forth in your writings [Origen]. But I beseech you not to devote your labour to the work of translating into Latin the sacred canonical books, unless you follow the method in which you have translated Job, viz. with the addition of notes, to let it be seen plainly what differences there are between this version of yours and that of the LXX., whose authority is worthy of highest esteem.

For my own part, I cannot sufficiently express my wonder that anything should at this date be found in the Hebrew MSS. which escaped so many translators perfectly acquainted with the language. I say nothing of the LXX., regarding whose harmony in mind and spirit, surpassing that which is found in even one man, I dare not in any way pronounce a decided opinion, except that in my judgment, beyond question, very high authority must in this work of translation be conceded to them. I am more perplexed by those translators who, though enjoying the advantage of labouring after the LXX. had completed their work, and although well acquainted, as it is reported, with the force of Hebrew words and phrases, and with Hebrew syntax, have not only failed to agree among themselves, but have left many things which, even after so long a time, still remain to be discovered and brought to light. Now these things were either obscure or plain: if they were obscure, it is believed that you are as likely to have been mistaken as the others; if they were plain, it is not believed that they [the LXX.] could possibly have been mistaken. Having stated the grounds of my perplexity, I appeal to your kindness to give me an answer regarding this matter.

CHAP. III. 3. I have been reading also some writings, ascribed to you, on the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. In reading your exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians, that passage came to my hand in which the Apostle Peter is called back from a course of dangerous dissimulation. To find there the defence of falsehood undertaken, whether by you, a man of such weight, or by any author (if it is the writing of another), causes me, I must confess, great sorrow, until at least those things which decide my opinion in the matter are refuted, if indeed they admit of refutation. For it seems to me that most disastrous consequences must follow upon our believing that anything false is found in the sacred books: that is to say, that the men by whom the Scripture has been given to us, and committed to writing, did put down in these books anything false. It is one question whether it may be at any time the duty of a good man to deceive; but it is another question whether it can have been the duty of a writer of Holy Scripture to de-

ceive: nay, it is not another question—it is no question at all. For if you once admit into such a high sanctuary of authority one false statement as made in the way of duty,[1] there will not be left a single sentence of those books which, if appearing to any one difficult in practice or hard to believe, may not by the same fatal rule be explained away, as a statement in which, intentionally, and under a sense of duty, the author declared what was not true.

4. For if the Apostle Paul did not speak the truth when, finding fault with the Apostle Peter, he said: "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" —if, indeed, Peter seemed to him to be doing what was right, and if, notwithstanding, he, in order to soothe troublesome opponents, both said and wrote that Peter did what was wrong;[2] —if we say thus, what then shall be our answer when perverse men such as he himself prophetically described arise, forbidding marriage,[3] if they defend themselves by saying that, in all which the same apostle wrote in confirmation of the lawfulness of marriage,[4] he was, on account of men who, through love for their wives, might become troublesome opponents, declaring what was false,—saying these things, forsooth, not because he believed them, but because their opposition might thus be averted? It is unnecessary to quote many parallel examples. For even things which pertain to the praises of God might be represented as piously intended falsehoods, written in order that love for Him might be enkindled in men who were slow of heart; and thus nowhere in the sacred books shall the authority of pure truth stand sure. Do we not observe the great care with which the same apostle commends the truth to us, when he says: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not."[5] If any one said to him, "Why are you so shocked by this falsehood, when the thing which you have said, even if it were false, tends very greatly

[1] Officiosum mendacium. [2] Gal. ii. 11–14. [3] 1 Tim. iv. 3.
[4] 1 Cor. vii. 10–16. [5] 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15.

to the glory of God?" would he not, abhorring the madness of such a man, with every word and sign which could express his feelings, open clearly the secret depths of his own heart, protesting that to speak well of a falsehood uttered on behalf of God, was a crime not less, perhaps even greater, than to speak ill of the truth concerning Him? We must therefore be careful to secure, in order to our knowledge of the divine Scriptures, the guidance only of such a man as is imbued with a high reverence for the sacred books, and a profound persuasion of their truth, preventing him from flattering himself in any part of them with the hypothesis of a statement being made not because it was true, but because it was expedient, and making him rather pass by what he does not understand, than set up his own feelings above that truth. For, truly, when he pronounces anything to be untrue, he demands that he be believed in preference, and endeavours to shake our confidence in the authority of the divine Scriptures.

5. For my part, I would devote all the strength which the Lord grants me, to show that every one of those texts which are wont to be quoted in defence of the expediency of falsehood ought to be otherwise understood, in order that everywhere the sure truth of these passages themselves may be consistently maintained. For as statements adduced in evidence must not be false, neither ought they to favour falsehood. This, however, I leave to your own judgment. For if you apply more thorough attention to the passage, perhaps you will see it much more readily than I have done. To this more careful study that piety will move you, by which you discern that the authority of the divine Scriptures becomes unsettled (so that every one may believe what he wishes, and reject what he does not wish) if this be once admitted, that the men by whom these things have been delivered unto us, could in their writings state some things which were not true, from considerations of duty;[1] unless, perchance, you purpose to furnish us with certain rules by which we may know when a falsehood might or might not become a duty. If this can be done, I beg you to set forth these rules with reasonings which may be neither equivocal nor precarious; and I beseech you by our Lord, in

[1] Aliqua officiose mentiri.

whom Truth was incarnate, not to consider me burdensome or presumptuous in making this request. For a mistake of mine which is in the interest of truth cannot deserve great blame, if indeed it deserves blame at all, when it is possible for you to use truth in the interest of falsehood without doing wrong.

CHAP. IV. 6. Of many other things I would wish to discourse with your most ingenuous heart, and to take counsel with you concerning Christian studies; but this desire could not be satisfied within the limits of any letter. I may do this more fully by means of the brother bearing this letter, whom I rejoice in sending to share and profit by your sweet and useful conversation. Nevertheless, although I do not reckon myself superior in any respect to him, even he may take less from you than I would desire; and he will excuse my saying so, for I confess myself to have more room for receiving from you than he has. I see his mind to be already more fully stored, in which unquestionably he excels me. Therefore, when he returns, as I trust he may happily do by God's blessing, and when I become a sharer in all with which his heart has been richly furnished by you, there will still be a consciousness of void unsatisfied in me, and a longing for personal fellowship with you. Hence of the two I shall be the poorer, and he the richer, then as now. This brother carries with him some of my writings, which if you condescend to read, I implore you to review them with candid and brotherly strictness. For the words of Scripture, "The righteous shall correct me in compassion, and reprove me; but the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head,"[1] I understand to mean that he is the truer friend who by his censure heals me, than the one who by flattery anoints my head. I find the greatest difficulty in exercising a right judgment when I read over what I have written, being either too cautious or too rash. For I sometimes see my own faults, but I prefer to hear them reproved by those who are better able to judge than I am; lest after I have, perhaps justly, charged myself with error, I begin again to flatter myself, and think that my censure has arisen from an undue mistrust of my own judgment.

[1] Ps. cxli. 5, translated from the Septuagint.

LETTER XXIX.

(A.D. 395.)

A LETTER FROM THE PRESBYTER OF THE DISTRICT OF HIPPO TO ALYPIUS THE BISHOP OF THAGASTE, CONCERNING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF LEONTIUS,[1] FORMERLY BISHOP OF HIPPO.

1. In the absence of brother Macharius, I have not been able to write anything definite concerning a matter about which I could not feel otherwise than anxious: it is said, however, that he will soon return, and whatever can be with God's help done in the matter shall be done. Although also our brethren, citizens of your town, who were with us, might sufficiently assure you of our solicitude on their behalf when they returned, nevertheless the thing which the Lord has granted to me is one worthy to be the subject of that epistolary intercourse which ministers so much to the comfort of us both; it is, moreover, a thing in the obtaining of which I believe that I have been greatly assisted by your own solicitude regarding it, seeing that it could not but constrain you to intercession on our behalf.

2. Therefore let me not fail to relate to your Charity what has taken place; so that, as you joined us in pouring out prayers for this mercy before it was obtained, you may now join us in rendering thanks for it after it has been received. When I was informed after your departure that some were becoming openly violent, and declaring that they could not submit to the prohibition (intimated while you were here) of that feast which they call Lætitia, vainly attempting to disguise their revels under a fair name, it happened most opportunely for me, by the hidden fore-ordination of the Almighty God, that on the fourth holy day that chapter of the Gospel fell to be expounded in ordinary course, in which the words occur: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine."[2] I discoursed therefore

[1] Leontius was Bishop of Hippo in the latter part of the second century. He built a church which was called after him, and in which some of the sermons of Augustine were delivered.

[2] Matt. vii. 6.

concerning dogs and swine in such a way as to compel those who clamour with obstinate barking against the divine precepts, and who are given up to the abominations of carnal pleasures, to blush for shame; and followed it up by saying, that they might plainly see how criminal it was to do, under the name of religion, within the walls of the church, that which, if it were practised by them in their own houses, would make it necessary for them to be debarred from that which is holy, and from the privileges which are the pearls of the Church.

3. Although these words were well received, nevertheless, as few had attended the meeting, all had not been done which so great an emergency required. When, however, this discourse was, according to the ability and zeal of each, made known abroad by those who had heard it, it found many opponents. But when the morning of Quadragesima came round, and a great multitude had assembled at the hour of exposition of Scripture, that passage in the Gospel was read in which our Lord said, concerning those sellers who were driven out of the temple, and the tables of the money-changers which He had overthrown, that the house of His Father had been made a den of thieves instead of a house of prayer.[1] After awakening their attention by bringing forward the subject of immoderate indulgence in wine, I myself also read this chapter, and added to it an argument to prove with how much greater anger and vehemence our Lord would cast forth drunken revels, which are everywhere disgraceful, from that temple from which He thus drove out merchandise lawful elsewhere, especially when the things sold were those required for the sacrifices appointed in that dispensation; and I asked them whether they regarded a place occupied by men selling what was necessary, or one used by men drinking to excess, as bearing the greater resemblance to a den of thieves.

4. Moreover, as passages of Scripture which I had prepared were held ready to be put into my hands, I went on to say that the Jewish nation, with all its lack of spirituality in religion, never held feasts, even temperate feasts, much less feasts disgraced by intemperance, in their temple, in which at

[1] Matt. xxi. 12.

that time the body and blood of the Lord were not yet offered' and that in history they are not found to have been excited by wine on any public occasion bearing the name of worship, except when they held a feast before the idol which they had made.[1] While I said these things I took the manuscript from the attendant, and read that whole passage. Reminding them of the words of the apostle, who says, in order to distinguish Christians from the obdurate Jews, that they are his epistle written, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart,[2] I asked further, with the deepest sorrow, how it was that, although Moses the servant of God broke both the tables of stone because of these rulers of Israel, I could not break the hearts of those who, though men of the New Testament dispensation, were desiring in their celebration of saints' days to repeat often the public perpetration of excesses of which the people of the Old Testament economy were guilty only once, and that in an act of idolatry.

5. Having then given back the manuscript of Exodus, I proceeded to enlarge, so far as my time permitted, on the crime of drunkenness, and took up the writings of the Apostle Paul, and showed among what sins it is classed by him, reading the text, "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one (ye ought) not even to eat;"[3] pathetically reminding them how great is our danger in eating with those who are guilty of intemperance even in their own houses. I read also what is added, a little further on, in the same epistle: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."[4] After reading these, I charged them to consider how believers could hear these words, "but ye are washed," if they still tolerated in their own hearts—that is, in God's inner temple—the abominations of such lusts as these against which the kingdom of heaven is shut.

[1] Ex. xxxii. 6. [2] 2 Cor. iii. 3. [3] 1 Cor. v. 11. [4] 1 Cor. vi. 9-11.

Then I went on to that passage: "When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper: for in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in, or despise ye the church of God?"[1] After reading which, I more especially begged them to remark that not even innocent and temperate feasts were permitted in the church: for the apostle said not, "Have ye not houses of your own in which to be drunken?"—as if it was drunkenness alone which was unlawful in the church; but, "Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?"—things lawful in themselves, but not lawful in the church, inasmuch as men have their own houses in which they may be recruited by necessary food: whereas now, by the corruption of the times and the relaxation of morals, we have been brought so low, that, no longer insisting upon sobriety in the houses of men, all that we venture to demand is, that the realm of tolerated excess be restricted to their own homes.

6. I reminded them also of a passage in the Gospel which I had expounded the day before, in which it is said of the false prophets: "Ye shall know them by their fruits."[2] I also bade them remember that in that place our works are signified by the word fruits. Then I asked among what kind of fruits drunkenness was named, and read that passage in the Epistle to the Galatians: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."[3] After these words, I asked how, when God has commanded that Christians be known by their fruits, we could be known as Christians by this fruit of drunkenness? I added also, that we must read what follows there: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."[4] And I pled with them to consider how shameful and lamentable

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 20–22. [2] Matt. vii. 16. [3] Gal. v. 19–21. [4] Gal. v. 22, 23.

it would be, if, not content with living at home in the practice of these works of the flesh, they even wished by them, forsooth, to honour the church, and to fill the whole area of so large a place of worship, if they were permitted, with crowds of revellers and drunkards: and yet would not present to God those fruits of the Spirit which, by the authority of Scripture, and by my groans, they were called to yield, and by the offering of which they would most suitably celebrate the saints' days.

7. This being finished, I returned the manuscript; and being asked to speak,[1] I set before their eyes with all my might, as the danger itself constrained me, and as the Lord was pleased to give strength, the danger shared by them who were committed to my care, and by me, who must give account to the Chief Shepherd, and implored them by His humiliation, by the unparalleled insults, the buffetings and spitting on the face which He endured, by His pierced hands and crown of thorns, and by His cross and blood, to have pity on me at least, if they were displeased with themselves, and to consider the inexpressible love cherished towards me by the aged and venerable Valerius, who had not scrupled to assign to me for their sakes the perilous burden of expounding to them the word of truth, and had often told them that in my coming here his prayers were answered; not rejoicing, surely, that I had come to share or to behold the death of our hearers, but rejoicing that I had come to share his labours for their eternal life. In conclusion, I told them that I was resolved to trust in Him who cannot lie, and who has given us a promise by the mouth of the prophet, saying of our Lord Jesus Christ, "If His children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from Him."[2] I declared, therefore, that I put my trust in Him, that if they despised the weighty words which had now been read and spoken to them, He would visit them with the rod and

[1] Imperatâ oratione.

[2] Ps. lxxxix. 30-33.

with stripes, and not leave them to be condemned with the world. In this appeal I put forth all the power in thought and utterance which, in an emergency so great and hazardous, our Saviour and Ruler was pleased to supply. I did not move them to weep by first weeping myself; but while these things were being spoken, I own that, moved by the tears which they began to shed, I myself could not refrain from following their example. And when we had thus wept together, I concluded my sermon with full persuasion that they would be restrained by it from the abuses denounced.

8. Next morning, however, when the day dawned, which so many were accustomed to devote to excess in eating and drinking, I received notice that some, even of those who were present when I preached, had not yet desisted from complaint, and that so great was the power of detestable custom with them, that, using no other argument, they asked, "Wherefore is this now prohibited? Were they not Christians who in former times did not interfere with this practice?" On hearing this, I knew not what more powerful means for influencing them I could devise; but resolved, in the event of their judging it proper to persevere, that after reading in Ezekiel's prophecy that the watchman has delivered his own soul if he has given warning, even though the persons warned refuse to give heed to him, I would shake my garments and depart. But then the Lord showed me that He leaves us not alone, and taught me how He encourages us to trust Him; for before the time at which I had to ascend the pulpit,[1] the very persons of whose complaint against interference with long-established custom I had heard came to me. Receiving them kindly, I by a few words brought them round to a right opinion; and when it came to the time for my discourse, having laid aside the lecture which I had prepared as now unnecessary, I said a few things concerning the question mentioned above, "Wherefore *now* prohibit this custom?" saying that to those who might propose it the briefest and best answer would be this: "Let us now at last put down what ought to have been earlier prohibited."

9. Lest, however, any slight should seem to be put by us

[1] Exhedra.

on those who, before our time, either tolerated or did not dare to put down such manifest excesses of an undisciplined multitude, I explained to them the circumstances out of which this custom seems to have necessarily risen in the Church,—namely, that when, in the peace which came after such numerous and violent persecutions, crowds of heathen who wished to assume the Christian religion were kept back, because, having been accustomed to celebrate the feasts connected with their worship of idols in revelling and drunkenness, they could not easily refrain from pleasures so hurtful and so habitual, it had seemed good to our ancestors, making for the time a concession to this infirmity, to permit them to celebrate, instead of the festivals which they renounced, other feasts in honour of the holy martyrs, which were observed, not as before with a profane design, but with similar self-indulgence. I added that now upon them, as persons bound together in the name of Christ, and submissive to the yoke of His august authority, the wholesome restraints of sobriety were laid—restraints with which the honour and fear due to Him who appointed them should move them to comply—and that therefore the time had now come in which all who did not dare to cast off the Christian profession should begin to walk according to Christ's will; and being now confirmed Christians, should reject those concessions to infirmity which were made only for a time in order to their becoming such.

10. I then exhorted them to imitate the example of the churches beyond the sea, in some of which these practices had never been tolerated, while in others they had been already put down by the people complying with the counsel of good ecclesiastical rulers; and as the examples of daily excess in the use of wine in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter were brought forward in defence of the practice, I said in the first place, that I had heard that these excesses had been often forbidden, but because the place was at a distance from the bishop's control, and because in such a city the multitude of carnally-minded persons was great, the foreigners especially, of whom there is a constant influx, clinging to that practice with an obstinacy proportioned to their ignorance, the suppression of so great an evil had not yet been

possible. If, however, I continued, we would honour the Apostle Peter, we ought to hear his words, and look much more to the epistles by which his mind is made known to us, than to the place of worship, by which it is not made known; and immediately taking the manuscript, I read his own words: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries."[1] After this, when I saw that all were with one consent turning to a right mind, and renouncing the custom against which I had protested, I exhorted them to assemble at noon for the reading of God's word and singing of psalms; stating that we had resolved thus to celebrate the festival in a way much more accordant with purity and piety; and that, by the number of worshippers who should assemble for this purpose, it would plainly appear who were guided by reason, and who were the slaves of appetite. With these words the discourse concluded.

11. In the afternoon a greater number assembled than in the forenoon, and there was reading and praise alternately up to the hour at which I went out in company with the bishop; and after our coming two psalms were read. Then the old man [Valerius] constrained me by his express command to say something to the people; from which I would rather have been excused, as I was longing for the close of the anxieties of the day. I delivered a short discourse in order to express our gratitude to God. And as we heard the noise of the feasting, which was going on as usual in the church of the heretics, who still prolonged their revelry while we were so differently engaged, I remarked that the beauty of day is enhanced by contrast with the night, and that when anything black is near, the purity of white is the more pleasing; and that, in like manner, our meeting for a spiritual feast might perhaps have been somewhat less sweet to us, but for the

[1] 1 Pet. iv. 1–3.

contrast of the carnal excesses in which the others indulged; and I exhorted them to desire eagerly such feasts as we then enjoyed, if they had tasted the goodness of the Lord. At the same time, I said that those may well be afraid who seek anything which shall one day be destroyed as the chief object of their desire, seeing that every one shares the portion of that which he worships; a warning expressly given by the apostle to such, when he says of them their "god is their belly,"[1] inasmuch as he has elsewhere said, "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them."[2] I added that it is our duty to seek that which is imperishable, which, far removed from carnal affections, is obtained through sanctification of the spirit; and when those things which the Lord was pleased to suggest to me had been spoken on this subject as the occasion required, the daily evening exercises of worship were performed; and when with the bishop I retired from the church, the brethren said a hymn there, a considerable multitude remaining in the church, and engaging in praise[3] even till daylight failed.

12. I have thus related as concisely as I could that which I am sure you longed to hear. Pray that God may be pleased to protect our efforts from giving offence or provoking odium in any way. In the tranquil prosperity which you enjoy we do with lively warmth of affection participate in no small measure, when tidings so frequently reach us of the gifts possessed by the highly spiritual church of Thagaste. The ship bringing our brethren has not yet arrived. At Hasna, where our brother Argentius is presbyter, the Circumcelliones, entering our church, demolished the altar. The case is now in process of trial; and we earnestly ask your prayers that it may be decided in a peaceful way, and as becomes the Catholic Church, so as to silence the tongues of turbulent heretics. I have sent a letter to the Asiarch.[4]

Brethren most blessed, may ye persevere in the Lord, and remember us. Amen.

[1] Phil. iii. 19. [2] 1 Cor. vi. 13. [3] Psallente.

[4] A magistrate who was also charged with the affairs pertaining to the protection of religion. The title belonged primarily to those who in the province of Asia had charge of the games.—*Codex Theodosianus*, xv. 9.

LETTER XXX.

(A.D. 396.)

This letter of Paulinus was written before receiving a reply to his former letter, No. 27, p. 72.

TO AUGUSTINE, OUR LORD AND HOLY AND BELOVED BROTHER, PAULINUS AND THERASIA, SINNERS, SEND GREETING.

My brother beloved in Christ the Lord, having through your holy and pious works come to know you without your knowledge, and to see you though absent long ago, my mind embraced you with unreserved affection, and I hastened to secure the gratification of hearing you through familiar brotherly exchange of letters. I believe also that by the Lord's hand and favour my letter has reached you; but as the youth whom, before winter, we had sent to salute you and others equally loved in God's name, has not returned, we could no longer either put off what we feel to be our duty, or restrain the vehemence of our desire to hear from you. If, then, my former letter has been found worthy to reach you, this is the second; if, however, it was not so fortunate as to come to your hand, accept this as the first.

2. But, my brother, judging all things as a spiritual man, do not estimate our love to you by the duty which we render, or the frequency of our letters. For the Lord, who everywhere, as one and the same, worketh His love in His own, is witness that, from the time when, by the kindness of the venerable bishops Aurelius and Alypius, we came to know you through your writings against the Manichæans, love for you has taken such a place in us, that we seemed not so much to be acquiring a new friendship as reviving an old affection. Now at length we address you in writing; and though we are novices in expressing, we are not novices in feeling love to you; and by communion of the spirit, which is the inner man, we are as it were acquainted with you. Nor is it strange that though distant we are near, though unknown we are well known to each other; for we are members of one body, having one Head, enjoying the effusion of the same grace, living by the same bread, walking in the same way, and dwelling in

the same home. In short, in all that makes up our being,—in the whole faith and hope by which we stand in the present life, or labour for that which is to come,—we are both in the spirit and in the body of Christ so united, that if we fell from this union we would cease to be.

3. How small a thing, therefore, is that which our bodily separation denies to us!—for it is nothing more than one of those fruits that gratify the eyes, which are occupied only with the things of time. And yet, perhaps, we should not number this pleasure which in the body we enjoy among the blessings which are only in time the portion of spiritual men, to whose bodies the resurrection will impart immortality; as we, though in ourselves unworthy, are bold to expect, through the merit of Christ and the mercy of God the Father. Wherefore I pray that the grace of God by our Lord Jesus Christ may grant unto us this favour too, that we may yet see your face. Not only would this bring great gratification to our desires; but by it illumination would be brought to our minds, and our poverty would be enriched by your abundance. This indeed you may grant to us even while we are absent from you, especially on the present occasion, through our sons Romanus and Agilis, beloved and most dear to us in the Lord (whom as our second selves we commend to you), when they return to us in the Lord's name, after fulfilling the labour of love in which they are engaged; in which work we beg that they may especially enjoy the goodwill of your Charity. For you know what high rewards the Most High promises to the brother who gives his brother help. If you are pleased to impart to me any gift of the grace that has been bestowed on you, you may safely do it through them; for, believe me, they are of one heart and of one mind with us in the Lord. May the grace of God always abide as it is with you, O brother beloved, venerable, most dear, and longed for in Christ the Lord! Salute on our behalf all the saints in Christ who are with you, for doubtless such attach themselves to your fellowship; commend us to them all, that they may, along with yourself, remember us in prayer.

SECOND DIVISION.

LETTERS WHICH WERE WRITTEN BY AUGUSTINE AFTER HIS BECOMING BISHOP OF HIPPO, AND BEFORE THE CONFERENCE HELD WITH THE DONATISTS AT CARTHAGE, AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE HERESY OF PELAGIUS IN AFRICA (A.D. 396–410).

LETTER XXXI.

(A.D. 396.)

TO BROTHER PAULINUS AND TO SISTER THERASIA, MOST BELOVED AND SINCERE, TRULY MOST BLESSED AND MOST EMINENT FOR THE VERY ABUNDANT GRACE OF GOD BESTOWED ON THEM, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. ALTHOUGH in my longing to be without delay near you in one sense, while still remote in another, I wished much that what I wrote in answer to your former letter (if, indeed, any letter of mine deserves to be called an answer to yours) should go with all possible expedition to your Grace,[1] my delay has brought me the advantage of a second letter from you. The Lord is good, who often withholds what we desire, that He may add to it what we would prefer. For it is one pleasure to me that you will write me on receiving my letter, and it is another that, through not receiving it at once, you have written now. The joy which I have felt in reading this letter would have been lost to me if my letter to your Holiness had been quickly conveyed to you, as I intended and earnestly desired. But now, to have this letter, and to expect a reply to my own, multiplies my satisfaction. The blame of the delay cannot be laid to my charge; and the Lord, in His more abundant kindness, has done that which He judged to be more conducive to my happiness.

2. We welcomed with great gladness in the Lord the holy brothers Romanus and Agilis, who were, so to speak, an addi-

[1] Charitas.

tional letter from you, capable of hearing and answering our voices, whereby most agreeably your presence was in part enjoyed by us, although only to make us long the more eagerly to see you. It would be at all times and in every way impossible for you to give, and unreasonable for us to ask, as much information from you concerning yourself by letter as we received from them by word of mouth. There was manifest also in them (what no paper could convey) such delight in telling us of you, that by their very countenance and eyes while they spoke, we could with unspeakable joy read you written on their hearts. Moreover, a sheet of paper, of whatever kind it be, and however excellent the things written upon it may be, enjoys no benefit itself from what it contains, though it may be unfolded with great benefit to others; but, in reading this letter of yours—namely, the minds of these brethren—when conversing with them, we found that the blessedness of those upon whom you had written was manifestly proportioned to the fulness with which they had been written upon by you. In order, therefore, to attain to the same blessedness, we transcribed in our own hearts what was written in theirs, by most eager questioning as to everything concerning you.

3. Notwithstanding all this, it is with deep regret that we consent to their so soon leaving us, even to return to you. For observe, I beseech you, the conflicting emotions by which we are agitated. Our obligation to let them go without delay was increased according to the vehemence of their desire to obey you; but the greater the vehemence of this desire in them, the more completely did they set you forth as almost present with us, because they let us see how tender your affections are. Therefore our reluctance to let them go increased with our sense of the reasonableness of their urgency to be permitted to go. Oh insupportable trial, were it not that by such partings we are not, after all, separated from each other,—were it not that we are "members of one body, having one Head, enjoying the effusion of the same grace, living by the same bread, walking in the same way, and dwelling in the same home!"[1] You recognise these words, I suppose, as quoted from your own letter; and why should not I also use

[1] Letter XXX. p. 93.

them? Why should they be yours any more than mine, seeing that, inasmuch as they are true, they proceed from communion with the same Head? And in so far as they contain something that has been specially given to you, I have so loved them the more on that account, that they have taken possession of the way leading through my breast, and would suffer no words to pass from my heart to my tongue until they went first, with the priority which is due to them as yours. My brother and sister, holy and beloved in God, members of the same body with us, who could doubt that we are animated by one spirit, except those who are strangers to that affection by which we are bound to each other?

4. Yet I am curious to know whether you bear with more patience and ease than I do this bodily separation. If it be so, I do not, I confess, take any pleasure in your fortitude in this respect, unless perhaps because of its reasonableness, seeing that I confess myself much less worthy of your affectionate longing than you are of mine. At all events, if I found in myself a power of bearing your absence patiently, this would displease me, because it would make me relax my efforts to see you; and what could be more absurd than to be made indolent by power of endurance? But I beg to acquaint your Charity with the ecclesiastical duties by which I am kept at home, inasmuch as the blessed father Valerius (who with me salutes you, and thirsts for you with a vehemence of which you will hear from our brethren), not content with having me as his presbyter, has insisted upon adding the greater burden of sharing the episcopate with him. This office I was afraid to decline, being persuaded, through the love of Valerius and the importunity of the people, that it was the Lord's will, and being precluded from excusing myself on other grounds by some precedents of similar appointments. The yoke of Christ, it is true, is in itself easy, and His burden light;[1] yet, through my perversity and infirmity, I may find the yoke vexatious and the burden heavy in some degree; and I cannot tell how much more easy and light my yoke and burden would become if I were comforted by a visit from you, who live, as I am informed, more disengaged and

[1] Matt. xi. 30.

free from such cares.[1] I therefore feel warranted in asking, nay, demanding and imploring you to condescend to come over into Africa, which is more oppressed with thirst for men such as you are than even by the well-known aridity of her soil.[2]

5. God knoweth that I long for your visiting this country, not merely to gratify my own desire, nor merely on account of those who through me, or by public report, have heard of your pious resolution;[3] I long for it for the sake of others also who either have not heard, or, hearing, have not believed the fame of your piety, but who might be constrained to love excellence of which they could then be no longer in ignorance or doubt. For although the perseverance and purity of your compassionate benevolence is good, more is required of you; namely, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may behold your good works, and may glorify your Father which is in heaven."[4] The fishermen of Galilee found pleasure not only in leaving their ships and their nets at the Lord's command, but also in declaring that they had left all and followed Him.[5] And truly he despises all who despises not only all that he was able, but also all that he was desirous to possess. What may have been desired is seen only by the eyes of God; what was actually possessed is seen also by the eyes of men. Moreover, when things trivial and earthly are loved by us, we are somehow more firmly wedded to what we have than to what we desire to have. For whence was it that he who sought from the Lord counsel as to the way of eternal life, went away sorrowful upon hearing that, if he would be perfect, he must sell all, and distribute to the poor, and have treasure in heaven, unless because, as the Gospel tells us, he had great possessions?[6] For it is one thing to forbear from appropriating what is wanting to us; it is another thing to rend away that which has become a part of ourselves: the former action is like declining food, the latter is like cutting

[1] Paulinus was then at Nola, having gone thither from Barcelona in A.D. 393 or 394. He became Bishop of Nola in 409.

[2] Nobilitate siccitatis.

[3] This refers to the voluntary poverty which Paulinus and Therasia, though of high rank and great wealth, embraced, selling all that they had in order to give to the poor.

[4] Matt. v. 16. [5] Matt. xix. 27. [6] Luke xviii. 22, 23.

off a limb. How great and how full of wonder is the joy with which Christian charity beholds in our day a sacrifice cheerfully made in obedience to the Gospel of Christ, which that rich man grieved and refused to make at the bidding of Christ Himself!

6. Although language fails to express that which my heart has conceived and labours to utter, nevertheless, since you perceive with your discernment and piety that the glory of this is not yours, that is to say, not of man, but the glory of the Lord in you (for you yourselves are most carefully on your guard against your Adversary, and most devoutly strive to be found as learners of Christ, meek and lowly in heart; and, indeed, it were better with humility to retain than with pride to renounce this world's wealth);—since, I say, you are aware that the glory here is not yours, but the Lord's, you see how weak and inadequate are the things which I have spoken. For I have been speaking of the praises of Christ, a theme transcending the tongue of angels. We long to see this glory of Christ brought near to the eyes of our people; that in you, united in the bonds of wedlock, there may be given to both sexes an example of the way in which pride must be trodden under foot, and perfection hopefully pursued. I know not any way in which you could give greater proof of your benevolence, than in resolving to be not less willing to permit your worth to be seen, than you are zealous to acquire and retain it.

7. I recommend to your kindness and charity this boy Vetustinus, whose case might draw forth the sympathy even of those who are not religious: the causes of his affliction and of his leaving his country you will hear from his own lips. As to his pious resolution—his promise, namely, to devote himself to the service of God—it will be more decisively known after some time has elapsed, when his strength has been confirmed, and his present fear is removed. Perceiving the warmth of your love for me, and encouraged thereby to believe that you will not grudge the labour of reading what I have written, I send to your Holiness and Charity three books: would that the size of the volumes were an index of the completeness of the discussion of so great a subject; for the question of free-will is handled in them! I know that these

books, or at least some of them, are not in the possession of our brother Romanianus; but almost everything which I have been able for the benefit of any readers to write is, as I have intimated, accessible to your perusal through him, because of your love to me, although I did not charge him to carry them to you. For he already had them all, and was carrying them with him: moreover, it was by him that my answer to your first letter was sent. I suppose that your Holiness has already discovered, by that spiritual sagacity which the Lord has given you, how much that man bears in his soul of what is good, and how far he still comes short through infirmity. In the letter sent through him you have, as I trust, read with what anxiety I commended himself and his son to your sympathy and love, as well as how close is the bond by which they are united to me. May the Lord build them up by your means! This must be asked from Him rather than from you, for I know how much it is already your desire.

8. I have heard from the brethren that you are writing a treatise against the Pagans: if we have any claim on your heart, send it at once to us to read. For your heart is such an oracle of divine truth, that we expect from it answers which shall satisfactorily and clearly decide the most prolix debates. I understand that your Holiness has the books of the most blessed father[1] Ambrose, of which I long greatly to see those which, with much care and at great length, he has written against some most ignorant and pretentious men, who affirm that our Lord was instructed by the writings of Plato.[2]

9. Our most blessed brother Severus, formerly of our community, now president[3] of the church in Milevis, and well known by the brethren in that city, joins me in respectful salutation to your Holiness. The brethren also who are with me serving the Lord salute you as warmly as they long to see you: they long for you as much as they love you; and they love you as your eminent goodness merits. The loaf which we send you will become more rich as a blessing through the love with which your kindness receives it. May the Lord keep you for ever from this generation,[4] my brother

[1] Beatissimi papæ.
[2] These books of Ambrose are lost.
[3] Antistes.
[4] See Ps. xii. 7.

and sister most beloved and sincere, truly benevolent, and most eminently endowed with abundant grace from the Lord.

LETTER XXXII.

This letter from Paulinus to Romanianus and Licentius expresses the satisfaction with which he heard of the promotion of Augustine to the episcopate, and conveys both in prose and in verse excellent counsels to Licentius: it is one which in this selection may without loss be omitted.

LETTER XXXIII.

(A.D. 396.)

TO PROCULEIANUS, MY LORD, HONOURABLE AND MOST BELOVED, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. THE titles prefixed to this letter I need not defend or explain at any length to you, though they may give offence to the vain prejudices of ignorant men. For I rightly address you as *lord*, seeing that we are both seeking to deliver each other from error, although to some it may seem uncertain which of us is in error before the matter has been fully debated; and therefore we are mutually *serving* one another, if we sincerely labour that we may both be delivered from the perversity of discord. That I labour to do this with a sincere heart, and with the fear and trembling of Christian humility, is not perhaps to most men manifest, but is seen by Him to whom all hearts are open. What I without hesitation esteem *honourable* in you, you readily perceive. For I do not esteem worthy of any honour the error of schism, from which I desire to have all men delivered, so far as is within my power; but yourself I do not for a moment hesitate to regard as worthy of honour, chiefly because you are knit to me in the bonds of a common humanity, and because there are conspicuous in you some indications of a more gentle disposition, by which I am encouraged to hope that you may readily embrace the truth when it has been demonstrated to you. As for my *love* to you, I owe not less than He commanded who so loved us as to bear the shame of the cross for our sakes.

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2. Be not, however, surprised that I have so long forborne from addressing your Benevolence; for I did not think that your views were such as were with great joy declared to me by brother Evodius, whose testimony I cannot but believe. For he tells me that, when you met accidentally at the same house, and conversation began between you concerning our hope, that is to say, the inheritance of Christ, you were kindly pleased to say that you were willing to have a conference with me in the presence of good men. I am truly glad that you have condescended to make this proposal; and I can in no wise forego so important an opportunity, given by your kindness, of using whatever strength the Lord may be pleased to give me in considering and debating with you what has been the cause, or source, or reason of a division so lamentable and deplorable in that Church of Christ to which He said: "Peace I give unto you, my peace I leave unto you."[1]

3. I heard from the brother aforesaid that you had complained of his having said something in answer to you in an insulting manner; but, I pray you, do not regard it as an insult, for I am sure it did not proceed from an overbearing spirit, as I know my brother well. But if, in disputing in defence of his own faith and the Church's love, he spoke perchance with a degree of warmth something which you regarded as wounding your dignity, that deserves to be called, not contumacy, but boldness. For he desired to debate and discuss the question, not to be merely submitting to you and flattering you. For such flattery is the oil of the sinner, with which the prophet does not desire to have his head anointed; for he saith: "The righteous shall correct me in compassion, and rebuke me; but the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head."[2] For he prefers to be corrected by the stern compassion of the righteous, rather than to be commended with the soothing oil of flattery. Hence also the saying of the prophet: "They who pronounce you happy cause you to err."[3] Therefore also it is commonly and justly said of a man whom false compliments have made proud, "his head has grown;"[4] for it has been increased by the oil of the sinner, that is, not of one

[1] John xiv. 27.
[2] Ps. cxli. 5.
[3] Isa. iii. 12, according to the LXX. version.
[4] Crevit caput.

correcting with stern truth, but of one commending with smooth flattery. Do not, however, suppose me to mean by this, that I wish it to be understood that you have been corrected by brother Evodius, as by a righteous man; for I fear lest you should think that anything is spoken by me also in an insulting manner, against which I desire to the utmost of my power to be on guard. But He is righteous who hath said, "I am the truth."[1] When, therefore, any true word has been uttered, though it may be somewhat rudely, by the mouth of any man, we are corrected not by the speaker, who may perhaps be not less a sinner than ourselves, but by the truth itself, that is to say, by Christ who is righteous, lest the unction of smooth but pernicious flattery, which is the oil of the sinner, should anoint our head. Although, therefore, brother Evodius, through undue excitement in defending the communion to which he belongs, may have said something too vehemently through strong feeling, you ought to excuse him on the ground of his age, and of the importance of the matter in his estimation.

4. I beseech you, however, to remember what you have been pleased to promise; namely, to investigate amicably with me a matter of so great importance, and so closely pertaining to the common salvation, in the presence of such spectators as you may choose (provided only that our words are not uttered so as to be lost, but are taken down with the pen; so that we may conduct the discussion in a more calm and orderly manner, and anything spoken by us which escapes the memory may be recalled by reading the notes taken). Or, if you prefer it, we may discuss the matter without the interference of any third party, by means of letters or conference and reading, wherever you please, lest perchance some hearers, unwisely zealous, should be more concerned with the expectation of a conflict between us, than the thought of our mutual profit by the discussion. Let the people, however, be afterwards informed through us of the debate, when it is concluded; or, if you prefer to have the matter discussed by letters exchanged, let these letters be read to the two congregations, in order that they may yet come to be no longer divided, but

[1] John xiv. 6.

one. In fact, I willingly accede to whatever terms you wish, or prescribe, or prefer. And as to the sentiments of my most blessed and venerable father Valerius, who is at present from home, I undertake with fullest confidence that he will hear of this with great joy; for I know how much he loves peace, and how free he is from being influenced by any paltry regard for vain parade of dignity.

5. I ask you, what have we to do with the dissensions of a past generation? Let it suffice that the wounds which the bitterness of proud men inflicted on our members have remained until now; for we have, through the lapse of time, ceased to feel the pain to remove which the physician's help is usually sought. You see how great and miserable is the calamity by which the peace of Christian homes and families is broken. Husbands and wives, agreeing together at the family hearth, are divided at the altar of Christ. By Him they pledge themselves to be at peace between themselves, yet in Him they cannot be at peace. Children have the same home, but not the same house of God, with their own parents. They desire to be secure of the earthly inheritance of those with whom they wrangle concerning the inheritance of Christ. Servants and masters divide their common Lord, who took on Him the form of a servant that He might deliver all from bondage. Your party honours us, and our party honours you. Your members appeal to us by our episcopal insignia,[1] and our members show the same respect to you. We receive the words of all, we desire to give offence to none. Why then, finding cause of offence in none besides, do we find it in Christ, whose members we rend asunder? When we may be serviceable to men that are desirous of terminating through our help disputes concerning secular affairs, they address us as saints and servants of God, in order that they may have their questions as to property disposed of by us: let us at length, unsolicited, take up a matter which concerns both our own salvation and theirs. It is not about gold or silver, or land, or cattle,—matters concerning which we are daily saluted with lowly respect, in order that we may bring disputes to a peaceful termination,—but it is concerning our

[1] Corona.

Head Himself that this dissension, so unworthy and pernicious, exists between us. However low they bow their heads who salute us in the hope that we may make them agree together in regard to the things of this world, our Head stooped from heaven even to the cross, and yet we do not agree together in Him.

6. I beg and beseech you, if there be in you that brotherly feeling for which some give you credit, let your goodness be approved sincere, and not feigned with a view to passing honours, by this, that your bowels of compassion be moved, so that you consent to have this matter discussed; joining with me in persevering prayer, and in peaceful discussion of every point. Let not the respect paid by the unhappy people to our dignities be found, in the judgment of God, aggravating our condemnation; rather let them be recalled along with us, through our unfeigned love, from errors and dissensions, and guided into the ways of truth and peace.

My lord, honourable and most beloved, I pray that you may be blessed in the sight of God.

LETTER XXXIV.

(A.D. 396.)

TO EUSEBIUS, MY EXCELLENT LORD AND BROTHER, WORTHY OF AFFECTION AND ESTEEM, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. GOD, to whom the secrets of the heart of man are open, knoweth that it is because of my love for Christian peace that I am so deeply moved by the profane deeds of those who basely and impiously persevere in dissenting from it. He knoweth also that this feeling of mine is one tending towards peace, and that my desire is, not that any one should against his will be coerced into the Catholic communion, but that to all who are in error the truth may be openly declared, and being by God's help clearly exhibited through my ministry, may so commend itself as to make them embrace and follow it.

2. Passing many other things unnoticed, what could be more worthy of detestation than what has just happened? A young man is reproved by his bishop for frequently beat-

ing his mother like a madman, and not restraining his impious hands from wounding her who bore him, even on those days on which the sternness of law shows mercy to the most guilty criminals.[1] He then threatens his mother that he would pass to the party of the Donatists, and that he would kill her whom he is accustomed to beat with incredible ferocity. He utters these threats, then passes over to the Donatists, and is rebaptized while filled with wicked rage, and is arrayed in white vestments while he is burning to shed his mother's blood. He is placed in a prominent and conspicuous position within the railing in the church; and to the eyes of sorrowful and indignant beholders, he who is purposing matricide is exhibited as a regenerate man.

3. I appeal to you, as a man of most mature judgment, can these things find favour in your eyes? I do not believe this of you: I know your wisdom. A mother is wounded by her son in the members of that body which bore and nursed the ungrateful wretch; and when the Church, his spiritual mother, interferes, she too is wounded in those sacraments by which, to the same ungrateful son, she ministered life and nourishment. Do you not seem to hear the young man gnashing his teeth in rage for a parent's blood, and saying, "What shall I do to the Church which forbids my wounding my mother? I have found out what to do: let the Church herself be wounded by such blows as she can suffer; let that be done in me which may cause her members pain. Let me go to those who know how to despise the grace with which she gave me spiritual birth, and to mar the form which in her womb I received. Let me vex both my natural and my spiritual mother with cruel tortures: let the one who was the second to give me birth be the first to give me burial; for her sorrow let me seek spiritual death, and for the other's death let me prolong my natural life." Oh, Eusebius! I appeal to you as an honourable man, what else may we expect than that now he shall feel himself, as a Donatist, so armed as to have no fear in assailing that unhappy woman, decrepit with age and helpless in her widowhood, from wounding whom he was restrained while he remained a Catholic? For what else had he pur-

[1] During Lent and the Easter holidays.

posed in his passionate heart when he said to his mother, "I will pass over to the party of Donatus, and I will drink your blood?" Behold, arrayed in white vestments, but with conscience crimson with blood, he has fulfilled his threat in part; the other part remains, viz. that he drink his mother's blood. If, therefore, these things find favour in your eyes, let him be urged by those who are now his clergy and his sanctifiers to fulfil within eight days the remaining portion of his vow.

4. The Lord's right hand indeed is strong, so that He may keep back this man's rage from that unhappy and desolate widow, and, by means known unto His own wisdom, may deter him from his impious design; but could I do otherwise than utter my feelings when my heart was pierced with such grief? Shall they do such things, and am I to be commanded to hold my peace? When He commands me by the mouth of the apostle, saying that those who teach what they ought not must be rebuked by the bishop,[1] shall I be silent through dread of their displeasure? The Lord deliver me from such folly! As to my desire for having such an impious crime recorded in our public registers, it was desired by me chiefly for this end, that no one who may hear me bewailing these proceedings, especially in other towns where it may be expedient for me to do so, may think that I am inventing a falsehood, and the rather, because in Hippo itself it is already affirmed that Proculeianus did not issue the order which was in the official report ascribed to him.

5. In what more temperate way could we dispose of this important matter than through the mediation of such a man as you, invested with most illustrious rank, and possessing calmness as well as great prudence and goodwill? I beg, therefore, as I have already done by our brethren, good and honourable men, whom I sent to your Excellency, that you will condescend to inquire whether it is the case that the presbyter Victor did not receive from his bishop the order which the public official records reported; or whether, since Victor himself has said otherwise, they have in their records laid a thing falsely to his charge, though they belong to the same communion with him. Or, if he consents to our calmly

[1] Tit. i. 9–13.

discussing the whole question of our differences, in order that the error which is already manifest may become yet more so, I willingly embrace the opportunity. For I have heard that he proposed that without popular tumult, in the presence only of ten esteemed and honourable men from each party, we should investigate what is the truth in this matter according to the Scriptures. As to another proposal which some have reported to me as made by him, that I should rather go to Constantina,[1] because in that town his party was more numerous; or that I should go to Milevis, because there, as they say, they are soon to hold a council;—these things are absurd, for my special charge does not extend beyond the Church of Hippo. The whole importance of this question to me, in the first place, is as it affects Proculeianus and myself; and if, perchance, he thinks himself not a match for me, let him implore the aid of any one whom he pleases as his colleague in the debate. For in other towns we interfere with the affairs of the Church only so far as is permitted or enjoined by our brethren bearing the same priestly office with us, the bishops of these towns.

6. And yet I cannot comprehend what there is in me, a novice, that should make him, who calls himself a bishop of so many years' standing, unwilling and afraid to enter into discussion with me. If it be my acquaintance with liberal studies, which perhaps he did not pursue at all, or at least not so much as I have done, what has this to do with the question in debate, which is to be decided by the Holy Scriptures or by ecclesiastical or public documents, with which he has for so many years been conversant, that he ought to be more skilled in them than I am? Once more, I have here my brother and colleague Samsucius, bishop of the Church of Turris,[2] who has not learned any of those branches of culture of which he is said to be afraid: let him attend in my place, and let the debate be between them. I will ask him, and, as I trust in the name of Christ, he will readily consent to take my place in this matter; and the Lord will, I trust, give aid to him when contending for the truth: for although unpolished in language, he is well instructed in the true faith. There is therefore no reason for his referring me to others whom I do not know, instead of

[1] Constantina, a chief city of Numidia. [2] Turris, a town in Numidia.

letting us settle between ourselves that which concerns ourselves. However, as I have said, I will not decline meeting them if he himself asks their assistance.

LETTER XXXV.

(A.D. 396.)

(Another letter to Eusebius on the same subject.)

TO EUSEBIUS, MY EXCELLENT LORD AND BROTHER, WORTHY OF AFFECTION AND ESTEEM, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. I DID not impose upon you, by importunate exhortation or entreaty in spite of your reluctance, the duty, as you call it, of arbitrating between bishops. Even if I had desired to move you to this, I might perhaps have easily shown how competent you are to judge between us in a cause so clear and simple; nay, I might show how you are already doing this, inasmuch as you, who are afraid of the office of judge, do not hesitate to pronounce sentence in favour of one of the parties before you have heard both. But of this, as I have said, I do not meanwhile say anything. For I had asked nothing else from your honourable good-nature,—and I beseech you to be pleased to remark it in this letter, if you did not in the former,—than that you should ask Proculeianus whether he himself said to his presbyter Victor that which the public registers have by official report ascribed to him, or whether those who were sent have written in the public registers not what they heard from Victor, but a falsehood; and further, what his opinion is as to our discussing the whole question between us. I think that he is not constituted judge between parties, who is only requested by the one to put a question to the other, and condescends to write what reply he has received. This also I now again ask you not to refuse to do, because, as I know by experiment, he does not wish to receive a letter from me, otherwise I would not employ your Excellency's mediation. Since, therefore, he does not wish this, what could I do less likely to give offence, than to apply through you, so good a man and such a

friend of his, for an answer concerning a matter about which the burden of my responsibility forbids me to hold my peace? Moreover, you say (because the son's beating of his mother is disapproved by your sound judgment), "If Proculeianus had known this, he would have debarred that man from communion with his party." I answer in a sentence, "He knows it now, let him now debar him."

2. Let me mention another thing. A man who was formerly a subdeacon of the church at Spana, Primus by name, when, having been forbidden such intercourse with nuns as contravened the laws of the Church,[1] he treated with contempt the established and wise regulations, was deprived of his clerical office,—this man also, being provoked by the divinely warranted discipline, went over to the other party, and was by them rebaptized. Two nuns also, who were settled in the same lands of the Catholic Church with him, either taken by him to the other party, or following him, were likewise rebaptized: and now, among bands of Circumcelliones and troops of homeless women, who have declined matrimony that they may avoid restraint, he proudly boasts himself in excesses of detestable revelry, rejoicing that he now has without hindrance the utmost freedom in that misconduct from which in the Catholic Church he was restrained. Perhaps Proculeianus knows nothing about this case either. Let it, therefore through you, as a man of grave and dispassionate spirit, be made known to him; and let him order that man to be dismissed from his communion, who has chosen it for no other reason than that he had, on account of insubordination and dissolute habits, forfeited his clerical office in the Catholic Church.

3. For my own part, if it please the Lord, I purpose to adhere to this rule, that whoever, after being deposed among them by a sentence of discipline, shall express a desire to pass over into the Catholic Church, must be received on condition of submitting to give the same proofs of penitence as those which, perhaps, they would have constrained him to give if he had remained among them. But consider, I beseech you, how worthy of abhorrence is their procedure in regard to those

[1] Accessus indisciplinatus sanctimonialium.

whom we check by ecclesiastical censures for unholy living, persuading them first to come to a second baptism, in order to their being qualified for which they declare themselves to be pagans (and how much blood of martyrs has been poured out rather than that such a declaration should proceed from the mouth of a Christian!); and thereafter, as if renewed and sanctified, but in truth more hardened in sin, to defy with the impiety of new madness, under the guise of new grace, that discipline to which they could not submit. If, however, I am wrong in attempting to obtain the correction of these abuses through your benevolent interposition, let no one find fault with my causing them to be made known to Proculeianus by the public registers,—a means of notification which in this Roman city cannot, I believe, be refused to me. For, since the Lord commands us to speak and proclaim the truth, and in teaching to rebuke what is wrong, and to labour in season and out of season, as I can prove by the words of the Lord and of the apostles,[1] let no man think that I am to be persuaded to be silent concerning these things. If they meditate any bold measures of violence or outrage, the Lord, who has subdued under His yoke all earthly kingdoms in the bosom of His Church spread abroad through the whole world, will not fail to defend her from wrong.

4. The daughter of one of the cultivators of the property of the Church here, who had been one of our catechumens, had been, against the will of her parents, drawn away by the other party, and after being baptized among them, had assumed the profession of a nun. Now her father wished to compel her by severe treatment to return to the Catholic Church; but I was unwilling that this woman, whose mind was so perverted, should be received by us unless with her own will, and choosing, in the free exercise of judgment, that which is better: and when the countryman began to attempt to compel his daughter by blows to submit to his authority, I immediately forbade his using any such means. Notwithstanding, after all, when I was passing through the Spanian district, a presbyter of Proculeianus, standing in a field belonging to an excellent Catholic woman, shouted after me

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 2 and Tit. i. 9–11.

with a most insolent voice that I was a Traditor and a persecutor; and he hurled the same reproach against that woman, belonging to our communion, on whose property he was standing. But when I heard his words, I not only refrained from pursuing the quarrel, but also held back the numerous company which surrounded me. Yet if I say, Let us inquire and ascertain who are or have been indeed Traditors and persecutors, they reply, "We will not debate, but we will rebaptize. Leave us to prey upon your flocks with crafty cruelty, like wolves; and if you are good shepherds, bear it in silence." For what else has Proculeianus commanded but this, if indeed the order is justly ascribed to him: "If thou art a Christian," said he, "leave this to the judgment of God; whatever we do, hold thou thy peace." The same presbyter, moreover, dared to utter a threat against a countryman who is overseer of one of the farms belonging to the Church.

5. I pray you to inform Proculeianus of all these things. Let him repress the madness of his clergy, which, honoured Eusebius, I have felt constrained to report to you. Be pleased to write to me, not your own opinion concerning them all, lest you should think that the responsibility of a judge is laid upon you by me, but the answer which they give to my questions. May the mercy of God preserve you from harm, my excellent lord and brother, most worthy of affection and esteem.

LETTER XXXVI.

(A.D. 396.)

TO MY BROTHER AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER CASULANUS, MOST BELOVED AND LONGED FOR, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

CHAP. I. 1. I know not how it was that I did not reply to your first letter; but I know that my neglect was not owing to want of esteem for you. For I take pleasure in your studies, and even in the words in which you express your thoughts; and it is my desire as well as advice that you make great attainments in your early years in the word of

God, for the edification of the Church. Having now received a second letter from you, in which you plead for an answer on the most just and amiable ground of that brotherly love in which we are one, I have resolved no longer to postpone the gratification of the desire expressed by your love; and although in the midst of most engrossing business, I address myself to discharge the debt due to you.

2. As to the question on which you wish my opinion, "whether it is lawful to fast on the seventh day of the week,"[1] I answer, that if it were wholly unlawful, neither Moses nor Elijah, nor our Lord Himself, would have fasted for forty successive days. But by the same argument it is proved that even on the Lord's day fasting is not unlawful. And yet, if any one were to think that the Lord's day should be appointed a day of fasting, in the same way as the seventh day is observed by some, such a man would be regarded, and not unjustly, as bringing a great cause of offence into the Church. For in those things concerning which the divine Scriptures have laid down no definite rule, the custom of the people of God, or the practices instituted by their fathers, are to be held as the law of the Church.[2] If we choose to fall into a debate about these things, and to denounce one party merely because their custom differs from that of others, the consequence must be an endless contention, in which the utmost care is necessary lest the storm of conflict overcast with clouds the calmness of brotherly love, while strength is spent in mere controversy which cannot adduce on either side any decisive testimonies of truth. This danger the author has not been careful to avoid, whose prolix dissertation you deemed worth sending to me with your former letter, that I might answer his arguments.

CHAP. II. 3. I have not at my disposal sufficient leisure to enter on the refutation of his opinions one by one: my time is demanded by other and more important work. But if you devote a little more carefully to this treatise of an anonymous

[1] Sabbato.

[2] We give the *ipsissima verba* of this canon: "In his enim rebus de quibus nihil certi statuit Scriptura divina mos populi Dei vel instituta majorum pro lege tenenda sunt."

Roman author,[1] the talents which by your letters you prove yourself to possess, and which I greatly love in you as God's gift, you will see that he has not hesitated to wound by his most injurious language almost the whole Church of Christ, from the rising of the sun to its going down. Nay, I may say not almost, but absolutely, the whole Church. For he is found to have not even spared the Roman Christians, whose custom he seems to himself to defend; but he is not aware how the force of his invectives recoils upon them, for it has escaped his observation. For when arguments to prove the obligation to fast on the seventh day of the week fail him, he enters on a vehement blustering protest against the excesses of banquets and drunken revelries, and the worst licence of intoxication, as if there were no medium between fasting and rioting. Now if this be admitted, what good can fasting on Saturday do to the Romans? since on the other days on which they do not fast they must be presumed, according to his reasoning, to be gluttonous, and given to excess in wine. If, therefore, there is any difference between loading the heart with surfeiting and drunkenness, which is always sinful, and relaxing the strictness of fasting, with due regard to self-restraint and temperance on the other, which is done on the Lord's day without censure from any Christian,—if, I say, there is a difference between these two things, let him first mark the distinction between the repasts of saints and the excessive eating and drinking of those whose god is their belly, lest he charge the Romans themselves with belonging to the latter class on the days on which they do not fast; and then let him inquire, not whether it is lawful to indulge in drunkenness on the seventh day of the week, which is not lawful on the Lord's day, but whether it is incumbent on us to fast on the seventh day of the week, which we are not wont to do on the Lord's day.

4. This question I would wish to see him investigate, and resolve in such a manner as would not involve him in the guilt of openly speaking against the whole Church diffused throughout the world, with the exception of the Roman Christians, and hitherto a few of the Western communities. Is it, I ask, to

[1] In the text the name is Urbicus, from Urbs Roma.

be endured among the entire Eastern Christian communities, and many of those in the West, that this man should say of so many and so eminent servants of Christ, who on the seventh day of the week refresh themselves soberly and moderately with food, that they "are in the flesh, and cannot please God;" and that of them it is written, "Let the wicked depart from me, I will not know their way;" and that they make their belly their god, that they prefer Jewish rites to those of the Church, and are sons of the bondwoman; that they are governed not by the righteous law of God, but by their own good pleasure, consulting their own appetites instead of submitting to salutary restraint; also that they are carnal, and savour of death, and other such charges, which if he had uttered against even one servant of God, who would listen to him, who would not be bound to turn away from him? But now, when he assails with such reproachful and abusive language the Church bearing fruit and increasing throughout the whole world, and in almost all places observing no fast on the seventh day of the week, I warn him, whoever he is, to beware. For in wishing to conceal from me his name, you plainly showed your unwillingness that I should judge him.

CHAP. III. 5. "The Son of man," he says, "is Lord of the Sabbath, and in that day it is by all means lawful to do good rather than do evil."[1] If, therefore, we do evil when we break our fast, there is no Lord's day upon which we live as we should. As to his admission that the apostles did eat upon the seventh day of the week, and his remark upon this, that the time for their fasting had not then come, because of the Lord's own words, "The days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall the children of the Bridegroom fast;"[2] since there is "a time to rejoice, and a time to mourn,"[3] he ought first to have observed, that our Lord was speaking there of fasting in general, but not of fasting upon the seventh day. Again, when he says that by fasting grief is signified, and that by food joy is represented, why does he not reflect what it was which God designed to signify by that which is written, "that He rested on the seventh day from all His works,"—namely, that joy, and not

[1] Matt. xii. 8-12. [2] Matt. ix. 15. [3] Eccles. iii. 4.

sorrow, was set forth in that rest? Unless, perchance, he intends to affirm that in God's resting and hallowing of the Sabbath, joy was signified to the Jews, but grief to the Christians. But God did not lay down a rule concerning fasting or eating on the seventh day of the week, either at the time of His hallowing that day because in it He rested from His works, or afterwards, when He gave precepts to the Hebrew nation concerning the observance of that day. The only thing enjoined on man there is, that he abstain from doing work himself, or requiring it from his servants. And the people of the former dispensation, accepting this rest as a shadow of things to come, obeyed the command by such abstinence from work as we now see practised by the Jews; not, as some suppose, through their being carnal, and misunderstanding what the Christians rightly understand. Nor do we understand this law better than the prophets, who, at the time when this was still binding, observed such rest on the Sabbath as the Jews believe ought to be observed to this day. Hence also it was that God commanded them to stone to death a man who had gathered sticks on the Sabbath;[1] but we nowhere read of any one being stoned, or deemed worthy of any punishment whatever, for either fasting or eating on the Sabbath. Which of the two is more in keeping with rest, and which with toil, let our author himself decide, who has regarded joy as the portion of those who eat, and sorrow as the portion of those who fast, or at least has understood that these things were so regarded by the Lord, when, giving answer concerning fasting, He said: "Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them?"[2]

6. Moreover, as to his assertion, that the reason of the apostles eating on the seventh day (a thing forbidden by the tradition of the elders) was, that the time for their fasting on that day had not come; I ask, if the time had not then come for the abolition of the Jewish rest from work on that day? Did not the tradition of the elders prohibit fasting on the one hand, and enjoin rest on the other? and yet the disciples of Christ, of whom we read that they did eat on the Sabbath, did on the

[1] Num. xv. 35. [2] Matt. ix. 15.

same day pluck the ears of corn, which was not then lawful, because forbidden by the tradition of the elders. Let him therefore consider whether it might not with more reason be said in reply to him, that the Lord desired to have these two things, the plucking of the ears of corn and the taking of food, done in the same day by His disciples, for this reason, that the former action might confute those who would prohibit all work on the seventh day, and the latter action confute those who would enjoin fasting on the seventh day; since by the former action He taught that the rest from labour was now, through the change in the dispensation, an act of superstition; and by the latter He intimated His will, that under both dispensations the matter of fasting or not was left to every man's choice. I do not say this by way of argument in support of my view, but only to show how, in answer to him, things much more forcible than what he has spoken might be advanced.

CHAP. IV. 7. "How shall we," says our author, "escape sharing the condemnation of the Pharisee, if we fast twice in the week?"[1] As if the Pharisee had been condemned for fasting twice in the week, and not for proudly vaunting himself above the publican. He might as well say that those also are condemned with that Pharisee, who give a tenth of all their possessions to the poor, for he boasted of this among his other works; whereas I would that it were done by many Christians, instead of a very small number, as we find. Or let him say, that whosoever is not an unjust man, or adulterer, or extortioner, must be condemned with that Pharisee, because he boasted that he was none of these; but the man who could think thus is, beyond question, beside himself. Moreover, if these things which the Pharisee mentioned as found in him, being admitted by all to be good in themselves, are not to be retained with the haughty boastfulness which was manifest in him, but are to be retained with the lowly piety which was not in him; by the same rule, to fast twice in the week is in a man such as the Pharisee unprofitable, but is in one who has humility and faith a religious service. Moreover, after all, the Scripture does not say that the Phari-

[1] Luke xviii. 11, 12.

see was condemned, but only that the publican was "justified rather than the other."

8. Again, when our author insists upon interpreting, in connection with this matter, the words of the Lord, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,"[1] and thinks that we cannot fulfil this precept unless we fast oftener than twice in the week, let him mark well that there are seven days in the week. If, then, from these any one subtract two, not fasting on the seventh day nor on the Lord's day, there remain five days in which he may surpass the Pharisee, who fasts but twice in the week. For I think that if any man fast three times in the week, he already surpasses the Pharisee who fasted but twice. And if a fast is observed four times, or even so often as five times, passing over only the seventh day and the Lord's day without fasting,—a practice observed by many through their whole lifetime, especially by those who are settled in monasteries,—by this not the Pharisee alone is surpassed in the labour of fasting, but that Christian also whose custom is to fast on the fourth, and sixth, and seventh days, as the Roman community does to a large extent. And yet your nameless metropolitan disputant calls such an one carnal, even though for five successive days of the week, excepting the seventh and the Lord's day, he so fast as to withhold all refection from the body; as if, forsooth, food and drink on other days had nothing to do with the flesh, and condemns him as making a god of his belly, as if it was only the seventh day's repast which entered into the belly.

. . . . . .

We have no compunction in passing over about eight columns here of this letter, in which Augustine exposes, with a tedious minuteness and with a waste of rhetoric, other feeble and irrelevant puerilities of the Roman author whose work Casulanus had submitted to his review. Instead of accompanying him into the shallow places into which he was drawn while pursuing such an insignificant foe, let us resume the translation at the point at which Augustine gives his own opinion regarding the question whether it is binding on Christians to fast on Saturday.

. . . . . .

CHAP. XI. 25. As to the succeeding paragraphs with which

[1] Matt. v. 21.

he concludes his treatise, they are, like some other things in it which I have not thought worthy of notice, even more irrelevant to a discussion of the question whether we should fast or eat on the seventh day of the week. But I leave it to yourself, especially if you have found any help from what I have already said, to observe and dispose of these. Having now to the best of my ability, and as I think sufficiently, replied to the reasonings of this author, if I be asked what is my own opinion in this matter, I answer, after carefully pondering the question, that in the Gospels and Epistles, and the entire collection of books for our instruction called the New Testament, I see that fasting is enjoined. But I do not discover any rule definitely laid down by the Lord or by the apostles as to days on which we ought or ought not to fast. And by this I am persuaded that exemption from fasting on the seventh day is more suitable, not indeed to obtain, but to foreshadow, that eternal rest in which the true Sabbath is realized, and which is obtained only by faith, and by that righteousness whereby the daughter of the King is all glorious within.

26. In this question, however, of fasting or not fasting on the seventh day, nothing appears to me more safe and conducive to peace than the apostle's rule: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not, and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth:"[1] "for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse;"[2] our fellowship with those among whom we live, and along with whom we live in God, being preserved undisturbed by these things. For as it is true that, in the words of the apostles, "it is evil for that man who eateth with offence,"[3] it is equally true that it is evil for that man who fasteth with offence. Let us not, therefore be like those who, seeing John the Baptist neither eating nor drinking, said, "He hath a devil;" but let us equally avoid imitating those who said, when they saw Christ eating and drinking, "Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."[4] After mentioning these sayings, the Lord subjoined a most important truth in the words, "But Wisdom is justified

[1] Rom. xiv. 3. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 8. [3] Rom. xiv. 20. [4] Matt. xi. 19.

of her children;" and if you ask who these are, read what is written, "The sons of Wisdom are the congregation of the righteous:"[1] they are they who, when they eat, do not despise others who do not eat; and when they eat not, do not judge those who eat, but who do despise and judge those who, with offence, either eat or abstain from eating.

CHAP. XII. 27. As to the seventh day of the week there is less difficulty in acting on the rule above quoted, because both the Roman Church and some other churches, though few, near to it or remote from it, observe a fast on that day; but to fast on the Lord's day is a great offence, especially since the rise of that detestable heresy of the Manichæans, so manifestly and grievously contradicting the Catholic faith and the divine Scriptures: for the Manichæans have prescribed to their followers the obligation of fasting upon that day; whence it has resulted that the fast upon the Lord's day is regarded with the greater abhorrence. Unless, perchance, some one be able to continue an unbroken fast for more than a week, so as to approach as nearly as may be to the fast of forty days, as we have known some do; and we have even been assured by brethren most worthy of credit, that one person did attain to the full period of forty days. For as, in the time of the Old Testament fathers, Moses and Elijah did not do anything against liberty of eating on the seventh day of the week, when they fasted forty days; so the man who has been able to go beyond seven days in fasting has not chosen the Lord's day as a day of fasting, but has only come upon it in course among the days for which, so far as he might be able, he had vowed to prolong his fast. If, however, a continuous fast is to be concluded within a week, there is no day upon which it may more suitably be concluded than the Lord's day; but if the body is not refreshed until more than a week has elapsed, the Lord's day is not in that case selected as a day of fasting, but is found occurring within the number of days for which it had seemed good to the person to make a vow.

28. Be not moved by that which the Priscillianists[2] (a

[1] Ecclus. iii. 1.

[2] Priscillian, Bishop of Avila in Spain, adopted Gnostic and Manichæan

sect very like the Manichæans) are wont to quote as an argument from the Acts of the Apostles, concerning what was done by the Apostle Paul in Troas. The passage is as follows: "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."[1] Afterwards, when he had come down from the supper chamber where they had been gathered together, that he might restore the young man who, overpowered with sleep, had fallen from the window and was taken up dead, the Scripture states further concerning the apostle: "When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed."[2] Far be it from us to accept this as affirming that the apostles were accustomed to fast habitually on the Lord's day. For the day now known as the Lord's day was then called the first of the week, as is more plainly seen in the Gospels; for the day of the Lord's resurrection is called by Matthew *μία σαββάτων*, and by the other three evangelists *ἡ μία (τῶν) σαββάτων*,[3] and it is well ascertained that the same is the day which is now called the Lord's day. Either, therefore, it was after the close of the seventh day that they had assembled,—namely, in the beginning of the night which followed, and which belonged to the Lord's day, or the first day of the week,—and in this case the apostle, before proceeding to break bread with them, as is done in the sacrament of the body of Christ, continued his discourse until midnight, and also, after celebrating the sacrament, continued still speaking again to those who were assembled, being much pressed for time in order that he might set out at dawn upon the Lord's day; or if it was on the first day of the week, at an hour before sunset on the Lord's day, that they had assembled, the words of the text, "Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow," themselves expressly state

errors and practices. He was condemned by the Synod of Saragossa in 381 A.D., and beheaded, along with his principal followers, by order of Maximus in 385 A.D.

[1] Acts xx. 7. [2] Acts xx. 11.

[3] "Prima Sabbati a Matthæo, a cæteris autem tribus una Sabbati dicitur." Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1.

the reason for his prolonging his discourse,—namely, that he was about to leave them, and wished to give them ample instruction. The passage does not therefore prove that they habitually fasted on the Lord's day, but only that it did not seem meet to the apostle to interrupt, for the sake of taking refreshment, an important discourse, which was listened to with the ardour of most lively interest by persons whom he was about to leave, and whom, on account of his many other journeyings, he visited but seldom, and perhaps on no other occasion than this, especially because, as subsequent events prove, he was then leaving them without expectation of seeing them again in this life. Nay, by this instance, it is rather proved that such fasting on the Lord's day was not customary, because the writer of the history, in order to prevent this being thought, has taken care to state the reason why the discourse was so prolonged, that we might know that in an emergency dinner is not to stand in the way of more important work. But indeed the example of these most eager listeners goes further; for by them all bodily refreshment, not dinner only, but supper also, was disregarded when thirsting vehemently, not for water, but for the word of truth; and considering that the fountain was about to be removed from them, they drank in with unabated desire whatever flowed from the apostle's lips.

29. In that age, however, although fasting upon the Lord's day was not usually practised, it was not so great an offence to the Church when, in any similar emergency to that in which Paul was at Troas, men did not attend to the refreshment of the body throughout the whole of the Lord's day until midnight, or even until the dawn of the following morning. But now, since heretics, and especially these most impious Manichæans, have begun not to observe an occasional fast upon the Lord's day, when constrained by circumstances, but to prescribe such fasting as a duty binding by sacred and solemn institution, and this practice of theirs has become well known to Christian communities; even were such an emergency arising as that which the apostle experienced, I verily think that what he then did should not now be done, lest the harm done by the offence given should be

greater than the good received from the words spoken. Whatever necessity may arise, or good reason, compelling a Christian to fast on the Lord's day,—as we find, *e.g.*, in the Acts of the Apostles, that in peril of shipwreck they fasted on board of the ship in which the apostle was for fourteen days successively, within which the Lord's day came round twice,[1]—we ought to have no hesitation in believing that the Lord's day is not to be placed among the days of voluntary fasting, except in the case of one vowing to fast continuously for a period longer than a week.

CHAP. XIII. 30. The reason why the Church prefers to appoint the fourth and sixth days of the week for fasting, is found by considering the gospel narrative. There we find that on the fourth day of the week[2] the Jews took counsel to put the Lord to death. One day having intervened,—on the evening of which, at the close, namely, of the day which we call the fifth day of the week, the Lord ate the possover with His disciples,—He was thereafter betrayed on the night which belonged to the sixth day of the week, the day (as is everywhere known) of His passion. This day, beginning with the evening, was the first day of unleavened bread. The evangelist Matthew, however, says that the fifth day of the week was the first of unleavened bread, because in the evening following it the paschal supper was to be observed, at which they began to eat the unleavened bread, and the lamb offered in sacrifice. From which it is inferred that it was upon the fourth day of the week that the Lord said, "You know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified;"[3] and for this reason that day has been regarded as one suitable for fasting, because, as the evangelist immediately adds: "Then assembled together the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who is called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill Him."[4] After the intermission of one day,—the day, namely, of which the evangelist writes:[5] "Now, on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto

[1] Acts xxvii. 33. [2] Commonly called quarta feria. [3] Matt. xxvi. 2.
[4] Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. [5] Matt. xxvi. 17.

Him, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the passover?"—the Lord suffered on the sixth day of the week, as is admitted by all: wherefore the sixth day also is rightly reckoned a day for fasting, as fasting is symbolical of humiliation; whence it is said, "I humbled my soul with fasting."[1]

31. The next day is the Jewish Sabbath, on which day Christ's body rested in the grave, as in the original fashioning of the world God rested on that day from all His works. Hence originated that variety in the robe of His bride[2] which we are now considering: some, especially the Eastern communities, preferring to take food on that day, that their action might be emblematic of the divine rest; others, namely the Church of Rome, and some churches in the West, preferring to fast on that day because of the humiliation of the Lord in death. Once in the year, namely at Easter, all Christians observe the seventh day of the week by fasting, in memory of the mourning with which the disciples, as men bereaved, lamented the death of the Lord (and this is done with the utmost devoutness by those who take food on the seventh day throughout the rest of the year); thus providing a symbolical representation of both events,—of the disciples' sorrow on one seventh day in the year, and of the blessing of repose on all the others. There are two things which make the happiness of the just and the end of all their misery to be confidently expected, viz. death and the resurrection of the dead. In death is that rest of which the prophet speaks: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."[3] In resurrection blessedness is consummated in the whole man, both body and soul. Hence it came to be thought that both of these things [death and resurrection] should be symbolized, not by the hardship of fasting, but rather by the cheerfulness of refreshment with food, excepting only the Easter Saturday, on which, as I have said, it had been resolved to commemorate by a more protracted fast the mourning of the disciples, as one of the events to be had in remembrance.

CHAP. XIV. 32. Since, therefore (as I have said above), we do

[1] Ps. xxxv. 13. [2] Ps. xlv. 13, 14. [3] Isa. xxvi. 20.

not find in the Gospels or in the apostolical writings, belonging properly to the revelation of the New Testament, that any law was laid down as to fasts to be observed on particular days; and since this is consequently one of many things, difficult to enumerate, which make up a variety in the robe of the King's daughter,[1] that is to say, of the Church,—I will tell you the answer given to my questions on this subject by the venerable Ambrose Bishop of Milan, by whom I was baptized. When my mother was with me in that city, I, as being only a catechumen, felt no concern about these questions; but it was to her a question causing anxiety, whether she ought, after the custom of our own town, to fast on the Saturday, or, after the custom of the Church of Milan, not to fast. To deliver her from perplexity, I put the question to the man of God whom I have just named. He answered, "What else can I recommend to others than what I do myself?" When I thought that by this he intended simply to prescribe to us that we should take food on Saturdays—for I knew this to be his own practice—he, following me, added these words: "When I am here I do not fast on Saturday; but when I am at Rome I do: whatever church you may come to, conform to its custom, if you would avoid either receiving or giving offence." This reply I reported to my mother, and it satisfied her, so that she scrupled not to comply with it; and I have myself followed the same rule. Since, however, it happens, especially in Africa, that one church, or the churches within the same district, may have some members who fast and others who do not fast on the seventh day, it seems to me best to adopt in each congregation the custom of those to whom authority in its government has been committed. Wherefore, if you are quite willing to follow my advice, especially because in regard to this matter I have spoken at greater length than was necessary, do not in this resist your own bishop, but follow his practice without scruple or debate.

[1] Ps. xlv. 13.

LETTER XXXVII.

(A.D. 397.)

TO SIMPLICIANUS,[1] MY LORD MOST BLESSED, AND MY FATHER MOST WORTHY OF BEING CHERISHED WITH RESPECT AND SINCERE AFFECTION, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. I RECEIVED the letter which your Holiness kindly sent,—a letter full of occasions of much joy to me, because assuring me that you remember me, that you love me as you used to do, and that you take great pleasure in every one of the gifts which the Lord has in His compassion been pleased to bestow on me. In reading that letter, I have eagerly welcomed the fatherly affection which flows from your benignant heart towards me: and this I have not found for the first time, as something short-lived and new, but long ago proved and well known, my lord, most blessed, and most worthy of being cherished with respect and sincere love.

2. Whence comes so great a recompense for the literary labour given by me to the writing of a few books as this, that your Excellency should condescend to read them? Is it not that the Lord, to whom my soul is devoted, has purposed thus to comfort me under my anxieties, and to lighten the fear with which in such labour I cannot but be exercised, lest, notwithstanding the evenness of the plain of truth, I stumble through want either of knowledge or of caution? For when what I write meets your approval, I know by whom it is approved, for I know who dwells in you; and the Giver and Dispenser of all spiritual gifts designs by your approbation to confirm my obedience to Him. For whatever in these writings of mine merits your approbation is from God, who has by me as His instrument said, "Let it be done," and it was done; and in your approval God has pronounced that what was done is "good."[2]

3. As for the questions which you have condescended to command me to resolve, even if through the dulness of my

[1] Simplicianus succeeded Ambrose in the see of Milan in 397 A.D. This letter is the preface to the two books addressed to Simplicianus, and contained in vol. vi. of the Benedictine edition of Augustine.

[2] Gen. i. 3, 4.

mind I did not understand them, I might through the assistance of your merits find an answer to them. This only I ask, that on account of my weakness you intercede with God for me, and that whatever writings of mine come into your sacred hands, whether on the topics to which you have in a manner so kind and fatherly directed my attention, or on any others, you will not only take pains to read them, but also accept the charge of reviewing and correcting them; for I acknowledge the mistakes which I myself have made, as readily as the gifts which God has bestowed on me.

LETTER XXXVIII.

(A.D. 397.)

TO HIS BROTHER PROFUTURUS AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. As for my spirit, I am well, through the Lord's good pleasure, and the strength which He condescends to impart; but as for my body, I am confined to bed. I can neither walk, nor stand, nor sit, because of the pain and swelling of a boil or tumour.[1] But even in such a case, since this is the will of the Lord, what else can I say than that I am well? For if we do not wish that which He is pleased to do, we ought rather to take blame to ourselves than to think that He could err in anything which He either does or suffers to be done. All this you know well; but what shall I more willingly say to you than the things which I say to myself, seeing that you are to me a second self? I commend therefore both my days and my nights to your pious intercessions. Pray for me, that I may not waste my days through want of self-control, and that I may bear my nights with patience: pray that, though I walk in the midst of the shadow of death, the Lord may so be with me that I shall fear no evil.

2. You have heard, doubtless, of the death of the aged Megalius,[2] for it is now twenty-four days since he put off this

[1] Rhagas vel exochas.

[2] Megalius, Bishop of Calama and Primate of Numidia, by whom two years before Augustine had been ordained Bishop of Hippo. The reflections upon anger which follow the allusion here to the death of Megalius were probably sug-

mortal body. I wish to know, if possible, whether you have seen, as you proposed, his successor in the primacy. We are not delivered from offences, but it is equally true that we are not deprived of our refuge; our griefs do not cease, but our consolations are equally abiding. And well do you know, my excellent brother, how, in the midst of such offences, we must watch lest hatred of any one gain a hold upon the heart, and so not only hinder us from praying to God with the door of our chamber closed,[1] but also shut the door against God Himself; for hatred of another insidiously creeps upon us, while no one who is angry considers his anger to be unjust. For anger habitually cherished against any one becomes hatred, since the sweetness which is mingled with what appears to be righteous anger makes us detain it longer than we ought in the vessel, until the whole is soured, and the vessel itself is spoiled. Wherefore it is much better for us to forbear from anger, even when one has given us just occasion for it, than, beginning with what seems just anger against any one, to fall, through this occult tendency of passion, into hating him. We are wont to say that, in entertaining strangers, it is much better to bear the inconvenience of receiving a bad man than to run the risk of having a good man shut out, through our caution lest any bad man be admitted; but in the passions of the soul the opposite rule holds true. For it is incomparably more for our soul's welfare to shut the recesses of the heart against anger, even when it knocks with a just claim for admission, than to admit that which it will be most difficult to expel, and which will rapidly grow from a mere sapling to a strong tree. Anger dares to increase with boldness more suddenly than men suppose, for it does not blush in the dark, when the sun has gone down upon it.[2] You will understand with how great care and anxiety I write these things, if you consider the things which lately on a certain journey you said to me.

3. I salute my brother Severus, and those who are with him. I would perhaps write to them also, if the limited time

gested by the remembrance of an incident in the life of that bishop. While Augustine was a presbyter, Megalius had written in anger a letter to him for which he afterwards apologized, formally retracting calumny which it contained.

[1] Matt. vi. 6. [2] Eph. iv. 26.

before the departure of the bearer permitted me. I beseech you also to assist me in persuading our brother Victor (to whom I desire through your Holiness to express my thanks for his informing me of his setting out to Constantina) not to refuse to return by way of Calama, on account of a business known to him, in which I have to bear a very heavy burden in the importunate urgency of the elder Nectarius concerning it; he gave me his promise to this effect. Farewell!

LETTER XXXIX.

(A.D. 397.)

TO MY LORD AUGUSTINE, A FATHER[1] TRULY HOLY AND MOST BLESSED, JEROME SENDS GREETING IN CHRIST.

CHAP. I. 1. Last year I sent by the hand of our brother, the sub-deacon Asterius, a letter conveying to your Excellency a salutation due to you, and readily rendered by me; and I think that my letter was delivered to you. I now write again, by my holy brother the deacon Præsidius, begging you in the first place not to forget me, and in the second place to receive the bearer of this letter, whom I commend to you with the request that you recognise him as one very near and dear to me, and that you encourage and help him in whatever way his circumstances may demand; not that he is in need of anything (for Christ has amply endowed him), but that he is most eagerly desiring the friendship of good men, and thinks that in securing this he obtains the most valuable blessing. His design in travelling to the West you may learn from his own lips.

CHAP. II. 2. As for us, established here in our monastery, we feel the shock of waves on every side, and are burdened with the cares of our lot as pilgrims. But we believe in Him who hath said, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,"[2] and are confident that by His grace and guidance we shall prevail against our adversary the devil.

I beseech you to give my respectful salutation to the holy and venerable brother, our father Alypius. The brethren

[1] [Papa.]

[2] John xvi. 33.

who, with me, devote themselves to serve the Lord in this monastery, salute you warmly. May Christ our Almighty God guard you from harm, and keep you mindful of me, my lord and father truly holy and venerable.

LETTER XL.

(A.D. 397.)

TO MY LORD MUCH BELOVED, AND BROTHER WORTHY OF BEING HONOURED AND EMBRACED WITH THE MOST SINCERE DEVOTION OF CHARITY, MY FELLOW-PRESBYTER JEROME, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

CHAP. I. 1. I thank you that, instead of a mere formal salutation, you wrote me a letter, though it was much shorter than I would desire to have from you; since nothing that comes from you is tedious, however much time it may demand. Wherefore, although I am beset with great anxieties about the affairs of others, and that, too, in regard to secular matters, I would find it difficult to pardon the brevity of your letter, were it not that I consider that it was written in reply to a yet shorter letter of my own. Address yourself, therefore, I entreat you, to that exchange of letters by which we may have fellowship, and may not permit the distance which separates us to keep us wholly apart from each other; though we are in the Lord bound together by the unity of the Spirit, even when our pens rest and we are silent. The books in which you have laboured to bring treasures from the Lord's storehouse give me almost a complete knowledge of you. For if I may not say, "I know you," because I have not seen your face, it may with equal truth be said that you do not know yourself, for you cannot see your own face. If, however, it is this alone which constitutes your acquaintance with yourself, that you know your own mind, we also have no small knowledge of it through your writings, in studying which we bless God that to yourself, to us, to all who read your works, He has given you as you are.

CHAP. II. 2. It is not long since, among other things, a certain book of yours came into my hands, the name of which

I do not yet know, for the manuscript itself had not the title written, as is customary, on the first page. The brother with whom it was found said that its title is *Epitaphium*,—a name which we might believe you to have approved, if we found in the work a notice of the lives or writings of those only who are deceased. Inasmuch, however, as mention is there made of the works of some who were, at the time when it was written, or are even now, alive, we wonder why you either gave this title to it, or permitted others to believe that you had done so. The book itself has our complete approval as a useful work.

CHAP. III. 3. In your exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians I have found one thing which causes me much concern. For if it be the case that statements untrue in themselves, but made, as it were, out of a sense of duty in the interest of religion,[1] have been admitted into the Holy Scriptures, what authority will be left to them? If this be conceded, what sentence can be produced from these Scriptures, by the weight of which the wicked obstinacy of error can be broken down? For as soon as you have produced it, if it be disliked by him who contends with you, he will reply that, in the passage alleged, the writer was uttering a falsehood under the pressure of some honourable sense of duty. And where will any one find this way of escape impossible, if it be possible for men to say and believe that, after introducing his narrative with these words, "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not,"[2] the apostle lied when he said of Peter and Barnabas, "I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel"?[3] For if they did walk uprightly, Paul wrote what was false; and if he wrote what was false *here*, when did he say what was true? Shall he be supposed to say what is true when his teaching corresponds with the predilection of his reader, and shall everything which runs counter to the impressions of the reader be reckoned a falsehood uttered by him under a sense of duty? It will be impossible to prevent men from finding reasons for thinking that he not only might have uttered a falsehood, but was bound to do so, if we admit this canon of interpretation. There is no need for many

[1] [Velut officiosa mendacia.] [2] Gal. i. 20. [3] Gal. ii. 14.

words in pursuing this argument, especially in writing to you, for whose wisdom and prudence enough has already been said. I would by no means be so arrogant as to attempt to enrich by my small coppers[1] your mind, which by the divine gift is golden; and none is more able than yourself to revise and correct that work to which I have referred.

CHAP. IV. 4. You do not require me to teach you in what sense the apostle says, "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews,"[2] and other such things in the same passage, which are to be ascribed to the compassion of pitying love, not the artifices of intentional deceit. For he that ministers to the sick becomes as if he were sick himself; not, indeed, falsely pretending to be under the fever, but considering, with the mind of one truly sympathizing, what he would wish done for himself if he were in the sick man's place. Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even although he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these; but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers; provided only that they did not build on these their hope of salvation, since the salvation which was foreshadowed in these has now been brought in by the Lord Jesus. For the same reason, he judged that these ceremonies should by no means be made binding on the Gentile converts, because, by imposing a heavy and superfluous burden, they might turn aside from the faith those who were unaccustomed to them.

5. The thing, therefore, which he rebuked in Peter was not his observing the customs handed down from his fathers —which Peter, if he wished, might do without being chargeable with deceit or inconsistency, for, though now superfluous, these customs were not hurtful to one who had been accustomed to them—but his compelling the Gentiles to observe Jewish ceremonies,[3] which he could not do otherwise than by so acting in regard to them as if their observance

1 [Obolis meis.] 2 1 Cor. ix. 20. 3 Gal. ii. 14.

was, even after the Lord's coming, still necessary to salvation, against which truth protested through the apostolic office of Paul. Nor was the Apostle Peter ignorant of this, but he did it through fear of those who were of the circumcision. Manifestly, therefore, Peter was truly corrected, and Paul has given a true narrative of the event, unless, by the admission of a falsehood here, the authority of the Holy Scriptures given for the faith of all coming generations is to be made wholly uncertain and wavering. For it is neither possible nor suitable to state within the compass of a letter how great and how unutterably evil must be the consequences of such a concession. It might, however, be shown seasonably, and with less hazard, if we were conversing together.

6. Paul had forsaken everything peculiar to the Jews that was evil, especially this: "That, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they had not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."[1] In this, moreover, he differed from them: that after the passion and resurrection of Christ, in whom had been given and made manifest the mystery of grace, according to the order of Melchizedek, they still considered it binding on them to celebrate, not out of mere reverence for old customs, but as necessary to salvation, the sacraments of the old economy, which were indeed at one time necessary, else had it been unprofitable and vain for the Maccabees to suffer martyrdom, as they did, for their adherence to them.[2] Lastly, in this also Paul differed from the Jews: that they persecuted the Christian preachers of grace as enemies of the law. These and all similar errors and sins he declares that he "counted but loss and dung that he might win Christ;"[3] but he does not, in so saying, disparage the ceremonies of the Jewish law, if only they were observed after the custom of their fathers, in the way in which he himself observed them, without regarding them as necessary to salvation, and not in the way in which the Jews affirmed that they must be observed, nor in the exercise of deceptive dissimulation such as he had rebuked in Peter. For if Paul observed these sacraments in order, by pretending to be a Jew, to gain the

[1] Rom. x. 3. [2] 2 Macc. vii. 1. [3] Phil. iii. 8.

Jews, why did he not also take part with the Gentiles in heathen sacrifices, when to them that were without law he became as without law, that he might gain them also? The explanation is found in this, that he took part in the Jewish sacrifices, as being himself by birth a Jew; and that when he said all this which I have quoted, he meant, not that he pretended to be what he was not, but that he felt with true compassion that he must bring such help to them as would be needful for himself if he were involved in their error. Herein he exercised not the subtlety of a deceiver, but the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer. In the same passage the apostle has stated the principle more generally: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some,"[1]—the latter clause of which guides us to understand the former as meaning that he showed himself one who pitied the weakness of another as much as if it had been his own. For when he said, "Who is weak, and I am not weak?"[2] he did not wish it to be supposed that he pretended to suffer the infirmity of another, but rather that he showed it by sympathy.

7. Wherefore I beseech you, apply to the correction and emendation of that book a frank and truly Christian severity, and chant what the Greeks call παλινῳδία. For incomparably more lovely than the Grecian Helen is Christian truth. In her defence, our martyrs have fought against Sodom with more courage than the heroes of Greece displayed against Troy for Helen's sake. I do not say this in order that you may recover the faculty of spiritual sight,[3]—far be it from me to say that you have lost it!—but that, having eyes both clear and quick in discernment, you may turn them towards that from which, in unaccountable dissimulation, you have turned them away, refusing to see the calamitous consequences which would follow on our once admitting that a writer of the divine books could in any part of his work honourably and piously utter a falsehood.

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 22. [2] 2 Cor. xi. 29.

[3] The reference here is to the story of the poet Stesichorus, who, having lost his sight as a judgment for writing an attack on Helen, was miraculously healed when he wrote a poem in retractation.

CHAP. V. 8. I had written some time ago a letter to you on this subject,[1] which was not delivered to you, because the bearer to whom it was entrusted did not finish his journey to you. From it I may quote a thought which occurred to me while I was dictating it, and which I ought not to omit in this letter, in order that, if your opinion is still different from mine, and is better, you may readily forgive the anxiety which has moved me to write. It is this: If your opinion is different, and is according to truth (for only in that case can it be better than mine), you will grant that "a mistake of mine, which is in the interest of truth, cannot deserve great blame, if indeed it deserves blame at all, when it is possible for you to use truth in the interest of falsehood without doing wrong."[2]

9. As to the reply which you were pleased to give me concerning Origen, I did not need to be told that we should, not only in ecclesiastical writers, but in all others, approve and commend what we find right and true, but reject and condemn what we find false and mischievous. What I craved from your wisdom and learning (and I still crave it), was that you should acquaint us definitely with the points in which that remarkable man is proved to have departed from the belief of the truth. Moreover, in that book in which you have mentioned all the ecclesiastical writers whom you could remember, and their works, it would, I think, be a more convenient arrangement if, after naming those whom you know to be heretics (since you have chosen not to pass them without notice), you would add in what respect their doctrine is to be avoided. Some of these heretics also you have omitted, and I would fain know on what grounds. If, however, perchance it has been from a desire not to enlarge that volume unduly that you refrained from adding to a notice of heretics, the statement of the things in which the Catholic Church has authoritatively condemned them, I beg you not to grudge bestowing on this subject, to which with humility and brotherly love I direct your attention, a portion of that literary labour by which already, by the grace of the Lord our God, you have in no small measure stimulated and

[1] [Epist. XXVIII.]

[2] See Letter XXVIII. sec. 5.

assisted the saints in the study of the Latin tongue, and publish in one small book (if your other occupations permit you) a digest of the perverse dogmas of all the heretics who up to this time have, through arrogance, or ignorance, or self-will, attempted to subvert the simplicity of the Christian faith; a work most necessary for the information of those who are prevented, either by lack of leisure or by their not knowing the Greek language, from reading and understanding so many things. I would urge my request at greater length, were it not that this is commonly a sign of misgivings as to the benevolence of the party from whom a favour is sought. Meanwhile I cordially recommend to your goodwill in Christ our brother Paulus, to whose high standing in these regions I bear before God willing testimony.

LETTER XLI.

(A.D. 397.)

TO FATHER AURELIUS, OUR LORD MOST BLESSED AND WORTHY OF VENERATION, OUR BROTHER MOST SINCERELY BELOVED, AND OUR PARTNER IN THE SACERDOTAL OFFICE, ALYPIUS AND AUGUSTINE SEND GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. "OUR mouth is filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing,"[1] by your letter informing us that, by the help of that God whose inspiration guided you, you have carried into effect your pious purpose concerning all our brethren in orders, and especially concerning the regular delivering of a sermon to the people in your presence by the presbyters, through whose tongues thus engaged your love sounds louder in the hearts than their voice does in the ears of men. Thanks be unto God! Is there anything better for us to have in our heart, or utter with our lips, or record with our pen, than this? Thanks be unto God! No other phrase is more easily spoken, and nothing more pleasant in sound, profound in significance, and profitable in practice, than this. Thanks be unto God, who has endowed you with a heart so true to the interests of your sons, and who has brought to light what you had

[1] Ps. cxxvi. 1.

latent in the inner soul, beyond the reach of human eye, giving you not only the will to do good, but the means of realizing your desires. So be it, certainly so be it! let these works shine before men, that they may see them, and rejoice and glorify your Father in heaven.[1] In such things delight yourself in the Lord; and may your prayers for these presbyters be graciously heard on their behalf by Him whose voice you do not consider it beneath you to hear when He speaks by them! May they go on, and walk, yea, run in the way of the Lord! May the small and the great be blessed together, being made glad by those who say unto them, "Let us go into the house of the Lord!"[2] Let the stronger lead; let the weaker imitate their example, being followers of them, as they are of Christ. May we all be as ants pursuing eagerly the path of holy industry, as bees labouring amidst the fragrance of holy duty; and may fruit be brought forth in patience by the saving grace of stedfastness unto the end! May the Lord "not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with the temptation may He make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it"![3]

2. Pray for us: we value your prayers as worthy to be heard, since you go to God with so great an offering of unfeigned love, and of praise brought to Him by your works. Pray that in us also these works may shine, for He to whom you pray knows with what fulness of joy we behold them shining in you. Such are our desires; such are the abounding comforts which in the multitude of our thoughts within us delight our souls.[4] It is so now because such is the promise of God; and as He hath promised, so shall it be in the time to come. We beseech you, by Him who hath blessed you, and has by you bestowed this blessing on the people whom you serve, to order any of the presbyters' sermons which you please to be transcribed, and after revisal sent to us. For I on my part am not neglecting what you required of me; and as I have written often before, I am still longing to know what you think of Tychonius' seven Rules or Keys.[5]

[1] Matt. v. 16. [2] Ps. cxxii. 1. [3] 1 Cor. ix. 13. [4] Ps. xciv. 19.

[5] On this work of Tychonius, see Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, b. iii., in which these seven keys for the opening of Scripture are stated and examined.

We warmly commend to you our brother Hilarinus, leading physician and magistrate of Hippo. As to our brother Romanus, we know how actively you are exerting yourself on his behalf, and that we need ask nothing but that God may prosper your endeavours.

LETTER XLII.

(A.D. 397.)

TO PAULINUS AND THERASIA, MY BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST, WORTHY OF RESPECT AND PRAISE; MOST EMINENT FOR PIETY, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

COULD this have been hoped or expected by us, that now by our brother Severus we should have to claim the answer which your love has not yet written to us, so long and so impatiently desiring your reply? Why have we been doomed through two summers (and these in the parched land of Africa) to bear this thirst? What more can I say? O generous man, who art daily giving away what is your own, be just, and pay what is a debt to us. Perhaps the reason of your long delay is your desire to finish and transmit to me that book against heathen worship, in writing which I had heard that you were engaged, and for which I had expressed a very earnest desire. O that you might by so rich a feast satisfy the hunger which has been sharpened by fasting (so far as your pen was concerned) for more than a year! but if this be not yet prepared, our complaints will not cease unless meanwhile you prevent us from being famished before that is finished. Salute our brethren, especially Romanus and Agilis.[1] From this place all who are with me salute you, and they would be less provoked by your delay in writing if they loved you less than they do.

[1] See Epistle XXXI. p. 95.

LETTER XLIII.

(A.D. 397.)

TO GLORIUS, ELEUSIUS, THE TWO FELIXES, GRAMMATICUS, AND ALL OTHERS TO WHOM THIS MAY BE ACCEPTABLE, MY LORDS MOST BELOVED AND WORTHY OF PRAISE, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

CHAP. I. 1. The Apostle Paul hath said: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself."[1] But though the doctrine which men hold be false and perverse, if they do not maintain it with passionate obstinacy, especially when they have not devised it by the rashness of their own presumption, but have accepted it from parents who had been misguided and had fallen into error, and if they are with anxiety seeking the truth, and are prepared to be set right when they have found it, such men are not to be counted heretics. Were it not that I believe you to be such, perhaps I would not write to you. And yet even in the case of a heretic, however puffed up with odious conceit, and insane through the obstinacy of his wicked resistance to truth, although we warn others to avoid him, so that he may not deceive the weak and inexperienced, we do not refuse to strive by every means in our power for his correction. On this ground I wrote even to some of the chief of the Donatists, not indeed letters of communion, which on account of their perversity they have long ceased to receive from the undivided Catholic Church which is spread throughout the world, but letters of a private kind, such as we may send even to pagans. These letters, however, though they have sometimes read them, they have not been willing, or perhaps it is more probable, have not been able, to answer. In these cases, it seems to me that I have discharged the obligation laid on me by that love which the Holy Spirit teaches us to render, not only to our own, but to all, saying by the apostle: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men."[2] In another place we are warned that those who are of a different

[1] Tit. iii. 10, 11. [2] 1 Thess. iii. 12.

opinion from us must be corrected with meekness, "if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."[1]

2. I have said these things by way of preface, lest any one should think, because you are not of our communion, that I have been influenced by forwardness rather than consideration in sending this letter, and in desiring thus to confer with you regarding the welfare of the soul; though I believe that, if I were writing to you about an affair of property, or the settlement of some dispute about money, no one would find fault with me. So precious is this world in the esteem of men, and so small is the value which they set upon themselves! This letter, therefore, shall be a witness in my vindication at the bar of God, who knows the spirit in which I write, and who has said: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the sons of God."[2]

CHAP. II. 3. I beg you, therefore, to call to mind that, when I was in your town,[3] and was discussing with you a little concerning the communion of Christian unity, certain Acts were brought forward by you, from which a statement was read aloud that about seventy bishops condemned Cæcilianus, formerly our Bishop of Carthage, along with his colleagues, and those by whom he was ordained. In the same Acts was given a full account of the case of Felix of Aptunga, as one singularly odious and criminal. When all these had been read, I answered that it was not to be wondered at if the men who then caused that schism, and who did not scruple to tamper with Acts, thought that it was right to condemn those against whom they had been instigated by envious and wicked men, although the sentence was passed without deliberation, in the absence of the parties condemned, and without acquainting them with the matter laid to their charge. I added that we have other ecclesiastical Acts, according to which Secundus of Tigisis, who was for the time Primate of Numidia, left those who, being there present, confessed themselves traditors to the judgment of God, and permitted them

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. [2] Matt. v. 9.

[3] Tubursi, a town recently identified, half-way between Calama and Madaura.

to remain in the episcopal sees which they then occupied; and I stated that the names of these men are in the list of those who condemned Cæcilianus, and that this Secundus himself was president of the Council in which he secured the condemnation of those who, being absent, were accused as traditors, by the votes of those whom he pardoned when, being present, they confessed the same crime.

4. I then said that some time after the ordination of Majorinus, whom they with impious wickedness set up against Cæcilianus, raising one altar against another, and rending with infatuated contentiousness the unity of Christ, they applied to Constantine, who was then emperor, to appoint bishops to act as judges and arbiters concerning the questions which, having arisen in Africa, disturbed the peace of the Church.[1] This having been done, Cæcilianus and those who had sailed from Africa to accuse him being present, and the case tried by Melchiades, who was then Bishop of Rome, along with the assessors whom at the request of the Donatists the Emperor had sent, nothing could be proved against Cæcilianus; and thus, while he was confirmed in his episcopal see, Donatus, who was present as his opponent, was condemned. After all this, when they all still persevered in the obstinacy of their most sinful schism, the Emperor being appealed to, took pains to have the matter again more carefully examined and settled at Arles. They, however, declining an ecclesiastical decision, appealed to Constantine himself to hear their cause. When this trial came on, both parties being present, Cæcilianus was pronounced innocent, and they retired vanquished; but they still persisted in the same perversity. At the same time the case of Felix of Aptunga was not forgotten, and he too was acquitted of the crimes laid to his charge, after an investigation by the proconsul at the order of the same prince.

5. Since, however, I was only saying these things, not

[1] They asked judges from Gaul, as a country in which none had been guilty of surrendering the sacred books under pressure of persecution. The bishops appointed were Maternus of Agrippina, Rheticius of Augustodunum, and Marinus of Arles. They were sent to Rome with fifteen Italian bishops; Melchiades, Bishop of Rome, presided in their meeting in A.D. 313, and acquitted Cæcilianus.

reading from the record, I seemed to you to be doing less than my earnestness had led you to expect. Perceiving this, I sent at once for that which I had promised to read. While I went on to visit the Church at Gelizi, intending to return thence to you, all these Acts were brought to you before two days had passed, and were read to you, as you know, so far as time permitted, in one day. We read first how Secundus of Tigisis did not dare to depose his colleagues in office who confessed themselves to be traditors; but afterwards, by the help of these very men, dared to condemn, without their confessing the crime, and in their absence, Cæcilianus and others who were his colleagues. And we next read the proconsular Acts in which Felix was, after a most thorough investigation, proved innocent. These, as you will remember, were read in the forenoon. In the afternoon I read to you their petition to Constantine, and the ecclesiastical record of the proceedings in Rome of the judges whom he appointed, by which the Donatists were condemned, and Cæcilianus confirmed in his episcopal dignity. In conclusion, I read the letters of the Emperor Constantine, in which the evidence of all these things was established beyond all possibility of dispute.

CHAP. III. 6. What more do you ask, sirs? what more do you ask? The matter in question here is not your gold and silver; it is not your land, nor property, nor bodily health that is at stake. I appeal to your souls concerning their obtaining eternal life, and escaping eternal death. At length awake! I am not handling an obscure question, nor searching into some hidden mystery, for the investigation of which capacity is found in no human intellect, or at least in only a few: the thing is clear as day. Is anything more obvious? could anything be more quickly seen? I affirm that parties innocent and absent were condemned by a Council, very numerous indeed, but hasty in their decisions. I prove this by the proconsular Acts, in which that man was wholly cleared from the charge of being a traditor, whom the Acts of the Council which your party brought forward proclaimed as most specially guilty. I affirm further, that the sentence against those who were said to be traditors was passed by men who had confessed themselves guilty of that

very crime. I prove this by the ecclesiastical Acts in which the names of those men are set forth, to whom Secundus of Tigisis, professing a desire to preserve peace, granted pardon of a crime which he knew them to have committed, and by whose help he afterwards, notwithstanding the destruction of peace, passed sentence upon others of whose crime he had no evidence; whereby he made it manifest that in the former decision he had been moved, not by a regard for peace, but by fear for himself. For Purpurius, Bishop of Limata, had alleged against him that he himself, when he had been put in custody by a curator and his soldiers, in order to compel him to give up the Scriptures, was let go, doubtless not without paying a price, in either giving up something, or ordering others to do so for him. He, fearing that this suspicion might be easily enough confirmed, having obtained the advice of Secundus the younger, his own kinsman, and having consulted all his colleagues in the episcopal office, remitted crimes which required no proof to be judged by God, and in so doing appeared to be protecting the peace of the Church: which was false, for he was only protecting himself.

7. For if, in truth, regard for peace had any place in his heart, he would not afterwards at Carthage have joined those traditors whom he had left to the judgment of God when they were present, and confessed their fault, in passing sentence for the same crime upon others who were absent, and against whom no one had proved the charge. He was bound, moreover, to be the more afraid on that occasion of disturbing the peace, inasmuch as Carthage was a great and famous city, from which any evil originating there might extend, as from the head of the body, throughout all Africa. Carthage was also near to the countries beyond the sea, and distinguished by illustrious renown, so that it had a bishop of more than ordinary influence, who could afford to disregard even a number of enemies conspiring against him, because he saw himself united by letters of communion both to the Roman Church, in which the supremacy of an apostolic chair has always flourished,[1] and to all other lands from

[1] "In qua semper apostolicæ cathedræ viguit principatus." The use in the translation of the indefinite article, "*an* apostolic chair," is vindicated by the

which Africa itself received the gospel, and was prepared to defend himself before these Churches if his adversaries attempted to cause an alienation of them from him. Seeing, therefore, that Cæcilianus declined to come before his colleagues, whom he perceived or suspected (or, as they affirm, pretended to suspect) to be biassed by his enemies against the real merits of his case, it was all the more the duty of Secundus, if he wished to be the guardian of true peace, to prevent the condemnation in their absence of those who had wholly declined to compear at their bar. For it was not a matter concerning presbyters or deacons or clergy of inferior order, but concerning colleagues who might refer their case wholly to the judgment of other bishops, especially of apostolical churches, in which the sentence passed against them in their absence would have no weight, since they had not deserted their tribunal after having compeared before it, but had always declined compearance because of the suspicions which they entertained.

8. This consideration ought to have weighed much with Secundus, who was at that time Primate, if his desire, as president of the Council, was to promote peace; for he might perhaps have quieted or restrained the mouths of those who were raging against men who were absent, if he had spoken thus: "Ye see, brethren, how after so great havoc of persecution peace has been given to us, through God's mercy, by the princes of this world; surely we, being Christians and bishops, ought not to break up the Christian unity which even pagan enemies have ceased to assail. Either, therefore, let us leave to God, as Judge, all those cases which the calamity of a most troublous time has brought upon the Church; or if there be some among you who have such certain knowledge of the guilt of other parties, that they are able to bring against them a definite indictment, and prove it if they plead not guilty, and who also shrink from having communion with such persons, let them hasten to our brethren and peers, the bishops of the churches beyond the sea, and present to them in the

language of Augustine in sec. 26 of this letter regarding Carthage, and by the words in Letter CCXXXII. sec. 3: "Christianæ societatis quæ per sedes apostolorum et successiones episcoporum certa per orbem propagatione diffunditur."

first place a complaint concerning the conduct and contumacy of the accused, as having through consciousness of guilt declined the jurisdiction of their peers in Africa, so that by these foreign bishops they may be summoned to compear and answer before them regarding the things laid to their charge. If they disobey this summons, their criminality and obduracy will become known to those other bishops; and by a synodical letter sent in their name to all parts of the world throughout which the Church of Christ is now extended, the parties accused will be excluded from communion with all churches, in order to prevent the springing up of error in the see of the Church at Carthage. When that has been done, and these men have been separated from the whole Church, we shall without fear ordain another bishop over the community in Carthage; whereas, if now another bishop be ordained by us, communion will most probably be withheld from him by the Church beyond the sea, because they will not recognise the validity of the deposition of the bishop, whose ordination was everywhere acknowledged, and with whom letters of communion had been exchanged; and thus, through our undue eagerness to pronounce without deliberation a final sentence, the great scandal of schism within the Church, when it has rest from without, may arise, and we may be found presuming to set up another altar, not against Cæcilianus, but against the universal Church, which, uninformed of our procedure, would still hold communion with him."

9. If any one had been disposed to reject sound and equitable counsels such as these, what could he have done? or how could he have procured the condemnation of any one of his absent peers, when he could not have any decisions with the authority of the Council, seeing that the Primate was opposed to him? And if such a serious revolt against the authority of the Primate himself arose, that some were resolved to condemn at once those whose case he desired to postpone, how much better would it have been for him to separate himself by dissent from such quarrelsome and factious men, than from the communion of the whole world! But because there were no charges which could be proved at the bar of foreign bishops against Cæcilianus and those who

took part in his ordination, those who condemned them were not willing to delay passing sentence; and when they had pronounced it, were not at any pains to intimate to the Church beyond the sea the names of those in Africa with whom, as condemned traditors, she should avoid communion. For if they had attempted this, Cæcilianus and the others would have defended themselves, and would have vindicated their innocence against their false accusers by a most thorough trial before the ecclesiastical tribunal of bishops beyond the sea.

10. Our belief concerning that perverse and unjust Council is, that it was composed chiefly of traditors whom Secundus of Tigisis had pardoned on their confession of guilt; and who, when a rumour had gone abroad that some had been guilty of delivering up the sacred books, sought to turn aside suspicion from themselves by bringing a calumny upon others, and to escape the detection of their crime, through surrounding themselves with a cloud of lying rumours, when men throughout all Africa, believing their bishops, said what was false concerning innocent men, that they had been condemned at Carthage as traditors. Whence you perceive, my beloved friends, how that which some of your party affirmed to be improbable could indeed happen, viz. that the very men who had confessed their own guilt as traditors, and had obtained the remission of their case to the divine tribunal, afterwards took part in judging and condemning others who, not being present to defend themselves, were accused of the same crime. For their own guilt made them more eagerly embrace an opportunity by which they might overwhelm others with a groundless accusation, and by thus finding occupation for the tongues of men, might screen their own misdeeds from investigation. Moreover, if it were inconceivable that a man should condemn in another the wrong which he had himself done, the Apostle Paul would not have had occasion to say: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein, thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."[1] This is exactly what these men did, so that the words of the apostle may be fully and appropriately applied to them.

[1] Rom. ii. 1.

11. Secundus, therefore, was not acting in the interests of peace and unity when he remitted to the divine tribunal the crimes which these men confessed: for, if so, he would have been much more careful to prevent a schism at Carthage, when there were none present to whom he might be constrained to grant pardon of a crime which they confessed; when, on the contrary, all that the preservation of peace demanded was a refusal to condemn those who were absent. They would have acted unjustly to these innocent men, had they even resolved to *pardon* them, when they were not proved guilty, and had not confessed the guilt, but were actually not present at all. For the guilt of a man is established beyond question when he accepts a pardon. How much more outrageous and blind were they who thought that they had power to condemn for crimes which, as unknown, they could not even have forgiven! In the former case, crimes that were known were remitted to the divine arbitration, lest others should be inquired into; in the latter case, crimes that were not known were made ground of condemnation, that those which were known might be concealed. But it will be said, the crime of Cæcilianus and the others was known. Even if I were to admit this, the fact of their absence ought to have protected them from such a sentence. For they were not chargeable with deserting a tribunal before which they had never stood; nor was the Church so exclusively represented in these African bishops, that in refusing to appear before them they could be supposed to decline all ecclesiastical jurisdiction. For there remained thousands of bishops in countries beyond the sea, before whom it was manifest that those who seemed to distrust their peers in Africa and Numidia could be tried. Have you forgotten what Scripture commands: "Blame no one before you have examined him; and when you have examined him, let your correction be just"?[1] If, then, the Holy Spirit has forbidden us to blame or correct any one before we have questioned him, how much greater is the crime of not merely blaming or correcting, but actually condemning men who, being absent, could not be examined as to the charges brought against them!

[1] Ecclus. xi. 7.

12. Moreover, as to the assertion of these judges, that though the parties accused were absent, having not fled from trial, but always avowed their distrust of that faction, and declined to appear before them, the crimes for which they condemned them were well known; I ask, my brethren, how did they know them? You reply, We cannot tell, since the evidence is not stated in the public Acts. But I will tell you how they knew them. Observe carefully the case of Felix of Aptunga, and first read how much more vehement they were against him; for they had just the same grounds for their knowledge in the case of the others as in his, who was afterwards proved most completely innocent by a thorough and severe investigation. How much greater the justice and safety and readiness with which we are warranted in believing the innocence of the others whose indictment was less serious, and their condemnation less severe, seeing that the man against whom they raged much more furiously has been proved innocent!

CHAP. IV. 13. Some one may perhaps make an objection which, though it was disapproved by you when it was brought forward, I must not pass over, for it has been made by others, viz.: It was not meet that a bishop should be acquitted by trial before a proconsul: as if the bishop had himself procured this trial, and it had not been done by order of the Emperor, to whose care this matter, as one concerning which he was responsible to God, especially belonged. For they themselves had constituted the Emperor the arbiter and judge in this question regarding the surrender of the sacred books, and regarding the schism, by their sending petitions to him, and afterwards appealing to him; and nevertheless they refuse to acquiesce in his decision. If, therefore, he is to be blamed whom the magistrate absolved, though he had not himself applied to that tribunal, how much more worthy of blame are those who desired an earthly king to be the judge of their cause! For if it be not wrong to appeal to the Emperor, it is not wrong to be tried by the Emperor, and consequently not wrong to be tried by him to whom the Emperor refers the case. One of your friends was anxious to make out a ground of complaint on the fact that, in the case of the bishop Felix, one witness was suspended on the rack, and another tortured with

pincers.[1] But was it in the power of Felix to prevent the prosecution of the inquiry with diligence, and even severity, when the case regarding which the advocate was labouring to discover the truth was his own? For what else would such a resistance to investigation have been construed to signify, than a confession of his crime? And yet this proconsul, surrounded with the awe-inspiring voices of heralds, and the blood-stained hands of executioners at his service, would not have condemned one of his peers in absence, who declined to come before his tribunal, if there was any other place where his cause could be disposed of. Or if he had in such circumstances pronounced sentence, he would himself assuredly have suffered the due and just award prescribed by civil law.

CHAP. V. 14. If, however, you repudiate the Acts of a proconsul, submit yourselves to the Acts of the Church. These have been all read over to you in their order. Perhaps you will say that Melchiades, bishop of the Roman Church, along with the other bishops beyond the sea who acted as his colleagues, had no right to usurp the place of judge in a matter which had been already settled by seventy African bishops, over whom the bishop of Tigisis as Primate presided. But what will you say if he in fact did not usurp this place? For the Emperor, being appealed to, sent bishops to sit with him as judges, with authority to decide the whole matter in the way which seemed to them just. This we prove, both by the petitions of the Donatists and the words of the Emperor himself, both of which were, as you remember, read to you, and are now accessible to be studied or transcribed by you. Read and ponder all these. See with what scrupulous care for the preservation or restoration of peace and unity everything was discussed; how the legal standing of the accusers was inquired into, and what defects were proved in this matter against some of them; and how it was clearly proved by the testimony of those present that they had nothing to say against Cæcilianus, but wished to transfer the whole matter to the people belonging to the party of Majorinus,[2] that is, to the seditious multitude who were opposed to the peace of the Church, in order, forsooth,

[1] Unguleæ, mentioned in Codex Justinianus, ix. 18. 7.

[2] Ordained by the Donatists bishop of Carthage in room of Cæcilianus.

that Cæcilianus might be accused by that crowd which they believed to be powerful enough to bend aside to their views the minds of the judges by mere turbulent clamour, without any documentary evidence or examination as to the truth; unless it was likely that true accusations should be brought against Cæcilianus by a multitude infuriated and infatuated by the cup of error and wickedness, in a place where seventy bishops had with insane precipitancy condemned, in their absence, men who were their peers, and who were innocent, as was proved in the case of Felix of Aptunga. They wished to have Cæcilianus accused by a mob such as that to which they had given way themselves, when they pronounced sentence upon parties who were absent, and who had not been examined. But assuredly they had not come to judges who could be persuaded to such madness.

15. Your own prudence may enable you to remark here both the obstinacy of these men, and the wisdom of the judges, who to the last persisted in refusing to admit accusations against Cæcilianus from the populace who were of the faction of Majorinus, who had no legal standing in the case. You will also remark how they were required to bring forward the men who had come with them from Africa as accusers or witnesses, or in some other connection with the case, and how it was said that they had been present, but had been withdrawn by Donatus. The said Donatus promised that he would produce them, and this promise he made repeatedly; yet, after all, declined to appear again in presence of that tribunal before which he had already confessed so much, that it seemed as if by his refusal to return he desired only to avoid being present to hear himself condemned; but the things for which he was to be condemned had been proved against him in his own presence, and after examination. Besides this, a libel bringing charges against Cæcilianus was handed in by some parties. How the inquiry was thereupon opened anew, what persons brought up the libel, and how nothing after all could be proved against Cæcilianus, I need not state, seeing that you have heard it all, and can read it as often as you please.

16. As to the fact that there were seventy bishops in the Council [which condemned Cæcilianus], you remember what

was said in the way of pleading against him the venerable authority of so great a number. Nevertheless these most venerable men resolved to keep their judgment unembarrassed by endless questions of hopeless intricacy, and did not care to inquire either what was the number of those bishops, or whence they had been collected, when they saw them to be blinded with such reckless presumption as to pronounce rash sentence upon their peers in their absence, and without having examined them. And yet what a decision was finally pronounced by the blessed Melchiades himself; how equitable, how complete, how prudent, and how fitted to make peace! For he did not presume to depose from his own rank those peers against whom nothing had been proved; and, laying blame chiefly upon Donatus, whom he had found the cause of the whole disturbance, he gave to all the others restoration if they chose to accept it, and was prepared to send letters of communion even to those who were known to have been ordained by Majorinus; so that wherever there were two bishops, through this dissension doubling their number, he decided that the one who was prior in the date of ordination should be confirmed in his see, and a new congregation found for the other. O excellent man! O son of Christian peace, father of the Christian people! Compare now this handful with that multitude of bishops, not counting, but weighing them: on the one side you have moderation and circumspection; on the other, precipitancy and blindness. On the one side, clemency has not wronged justice, nor has justice been at variance with clemency; on the other side, fear was hiding itself under passion, and passion was goaded to excess by fear. In the one case, they assembled to clear the innocent from false accusations by discovering where the guilt really lay; in the other, they had met to screen the guilty from true accusations by bringing false charges against the innocent.

CHAP. VI. 17. Could Cæcilianus leave himself to be tried and judged by these men, when he had such others before whom, if his case were argued, he could most easily prove his innocence? He could not have left himself in their hands even had he been a stranger recently ordained over the Church at Carthage, and consequently not aware of the power in per-

verting the minds of men, either worthless or unwise, which was then possessed by a certain Lucilla, a very wealthy woman, whom he had offended when he was a deacon, by rebuking her in the exercise of church discipline; for this evil influence was also at work to bring about that iniquitous transaction. For in that Council, in which men absent and innocent were condemned by persons who had confessed themselves to be traditors, there were a few who wished, by defaming others, to hide their own crimes, that men, led astray by unfounded rumours, might be turned aside from inquiring into the truth. The number of those who were especially interested in this was not great, although the preponderating authority was on their side; because they had with them Secundus himself, who, yielding to fear, had pardoned them. But the rest are said to have been bribed and instigated specially against Cæcilianus by the money of Lucilla. There are Acts in the possession of Zenophilus, a man of consular rank, according to which one Nundinarius, a deacon who had been (as we learn from the same Acts) deposed by Sylvanus, bishop of Cirta, having failed in an attempt to recommend himself to that party by the letters of other bishops, in the heat of passion revealed many secrets, and brought them forward in open court; amongst which we read this on the record, that the rearing of rival altars in the Church of Carthage, the chief city of Africa, was due to the bishops being bribed by the money of Lucilla. I am aware that I did not read these Acts to you, but you remember that there was not time. Besides these influences, there was also some bitterness arising from mortified pride, because they had not themselves ordained Cæcilianus bishop of Carthage.

18. When Cæcilianus knew that these men had assembled, not as impartial judges, but hostile and perverted through all these things, was it possible that either he should consent, or the people over whom he presided should allow him, to leave the church and go into a private dwelling, where he was not to be tried fairly by his peers, but to be slain by a small faction, urged on by a woman's spite, especially when he saw that his case might have an unbiassed and equitable hearing before the Church beyond the sea, which was uninfluenced by

private enmities on either side in the dispute? If his adversaries declined pleading before that tribunal, they would thereby cut themselves off from that communion with the whole world which innocence enjoys. And if they attempted there to bring a charge against him, then he would compear for himself, and defend his innocence against all their plots, as you have learned that he afterwards did, when they, already guilty of schism, and stained with the atrocious crime of having actually reared their rival altar, applied—but too late—for the decision of the Church beyond the sea. For this they would have done at first, if their cause had been supported by truth; but their policy was to come to the trial after false rumours had gained strength by lapse of time, and public report of old standing, so to speak, had prejudged the case; or, which seems more likely, having first condemned Cæcilianus as they pleased, they relied for safety upon their number, and did not dare to open the discussion of so bad a case before other judges, by whom, as they were not influenced by bribery, the truth might be discovered.

CHAP. VII. 19. But when they actually found that the communion of the whole world with Cæcilianus continued as before, and that letters of communion from churches beyond the sea were sent to him, and not to the man whom they had flagitiously ordained, they became ashamed of being always silent; for it might be objected to them: Why did they suffer the Church in so many countries to go on in ignorance, communicating with men that were condemned; and especially why did they cut themselves off from communion with the whole world, against which they had no charge to make, by their bearing in silence the exclusion from that communion of the bishop whom they had ordained in Carthage? They chose, therefore, as it is reported, to bring their dispute with Cæcilianus before the foreign churches, in order to secure one of two things, either of which they were prepared to accept: if, on the one hand, by any amount of craft, they succeeded in making good the false accusation, they would abundantly satisfy their lust of revenge; if, however, they failed, they might remain as stubborn as before, but would now have, as it were, some excuse for it, in alleging that they had suffered at the hands of an

unjust tribunal,—the common outcry of all worthless litigants, though they have been defeated by the clearest light of truth, —as if it might not have been said, and most justly said, to them: "Well, let us suppose that those bishops who decided the case at Rome were not good judges; there still remained a plenary Council of the universal Church, in which these judges themselves might be put on their defence; so that, if they were convicted of mistake, their decisions might be reversed." Whether they have done this or not, let them prove: for we easily prove that it was not done, by the fact that the whole world does not communicate with them; or if it was done, they were defeated there also, of which their state of separation from the Church is a proof.

20. What they actually did afterwards, however, is sufficiently shown in the letter of the Emperor. For it was not before other bishops, but at the bar of the Emperor, that they dared to bring the charge of wrong judgment against ecclesiastical judges of so high authority as the bishops by whose sentence the innocence of Cæcilianus and their own guilt had been declared. He granted them the second trial at Arles, before other bishops; not because this was due to them, but only as a concession to their stubbornness, and from a desire by all means to restrain so great effrontery. For this Christian Emperor did not presume so to grant their unruly and groundless complaints as to make himself the judge of the decision pronounced by the bishops who had sat at Rome; but he appointed, as I have said, other bishops, from whom, however, they preferred again to appeal to the Emperor himself; and you have heard the terms in which he disapproved of this. Would that even then they had desisted from their most insane contentions, and had yielded at last to the truth, as he yielded to them when (intending afterwards to apologize for this course to the reverend prelates) he consented to try their case after the bishops, on condition that, if they did not submit to his decision, for which they had themselves appealed, they should thenceforward be silent! For he ordered that both parties should meet him at Rome to argue the case. When Cæcilianus, for some reason, failed to compear there, he, at their request, ordered all to follow him to Milan. Then

some of their party began to withdraw, perhaps offended that Constantine did not follow their example, and condemn Cæcilianus in his absence at once and summarily. When the prudent Emperor was aware of this, he compelled the rest to come to Milan in charge of his guards. Cæcilianus having come thither, he brought him forward in person, as he has written; and having examined the matter with the diligence, caution, and prudence which his letters on the subject indicate, he pronounced Cæcilianus perfectly innocent, and them most criminal.

CHAP. VIII. 21. And to this day they administer baptism outside of the communion of the Church, and, if they can, they rebaptize the members of the Church: they offer sacrifice in discord and schism, and salute in the name of peace communities which they pronounce beyond the bounds of the peace of salvation. The unity of Christ is rent asunder, the heritage of Christ is reproached, the baptism of Christ is treated with contempt; and they refuse to have these errors corrected by constituted human authorities, applying penalties of a temporal kind in order to prevent them from being doomed to eternal punishment for such sacrilege. We blame them for the rage which has driven them to schism, the madness which makes them rebaptize, and for the sin of separation from the heritage of Christ, which has been spread abroad through all lands. In using manuscripts which are in their hands as well as in ours, we mention churches, the names of which are now read by them also, but with which they have now no communion; and when these are pronounced in their conventicles, they say to the reader, "Peace be with thee;" and yet they have no peace with those to whom these letters were written. They, on the other hand, blame us for crimes of men now dead, making charges which either are false, or, if true, do not concern us; not perceiving that in the things which we lay to their charge they are all involved, but in the things which they lay to our charge the blame is due to the chaff or the tares in the Lord's harvest, and the crime does not belong to the good grain; not considering, moreover, that within our unity those only have fellowship with the wicked who take pleasure in their being such, whereas those

who are displeased with their wickedness yet cannot correct them,—as they do not presume to root out the tares before the harvest, lest they root out the wheat also,[1]—have fellowship with them, not in their deeds, but in the altar of Christ; so that not only do they avoid being defiled by them, but they deserve commendation and praise according to the word of God, because, in order to prevent the name of Christ from being reproached by odious schisms, they tolerate in the interest of unity that which in the interest of righteousness they hate.

22. If they have ears, let them hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. For in the Apocalypse of John we read: "Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus write: These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name's sake hast tolerated them,[2] and hast not fainted."[3] Now, if He wished this to be understood as addressed to a celestial angel, and not to those invested with authority in the Church, He would not go on to say: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."[4] This could not be said to the heavenly angels, who retain their love unchanged, as the only beings of their order that have departed and fallen from their love are the devil and his angels. The first love here alluded to is that which was proved in their tolerating for Christ's name's sake the false apostles. To this He commands them to return, and to do "their first works." Now we are reproached with the crimes of bad men, not done by us, but by others; and some of them,

[1] Matt. xiii. 29.

[2] Augustine translates ἐβάστασας (E. V. "hast laboured") by "sustinuisti eos"—"hast tolerated *them*;" and upon this his argument turns.

[3] Rev. ii. 1-3. [4] Rev. ii. 4, 5.

moreover, not known to us. Nevertheless, even if they were actually committed, and that under our own eyes, and we bore with them for the sake of unity, letting the tares alone on account of the wheat, whosoever with open heart receives the Holy Scriptures would pronounce us not only free from blame, but worthy of no small praise.

23. Aaron bears with the multitude demanding, fashioning, and worshipping an idol. Moses bears with thousands murmuring against God, and so often offending His holy name. David bears with Saul his persecutor, even when forsaking the things that are above by his wicked life, and following after the things that are beneath by magical arts, avenges his death, and calls him the Lord's anointed,[1] because of the venerable rite by which he had been consecrated. Samuel bears with the reprobate sons of Eli, and his own perverse sons, whom the people refused to tolerate, and were therefore rebuked by the warning and punished by the severity of God. Lastly, he bears with the nation itself, though proud and despising God. Isaiah bears with those against whom he hurls so many merited denunciations. Jeremiah bears with those at whose hands he suffers so many things. Zechariah bears with the scribes and Pharisees, as to whose character in those days Scripture informs us. I know that I have omitted many examples: let those who are willing and able read the divine records for themselves: they will find that all the holy servants and friends of God have always had to bear with some among their own people, with whom, nevertheless, they partook in the sacraments of that dispensation, and in so doing not only were not defiled by them, but were to be commended for their tolerant spirit, "endeavouring to keep," as the apostle says, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."[2] Let them also observe what has occurred since the Lord's coming, in which time we would find many more examples of this toleration in all parts of the world, if they could all be written down and authenticated: but attend to those which are on record. The Lord Himself bears with Judas, a devil, a thief, His own betrayer; He permits him, along with the innocent disciples, to receive

[1] Christum Domini. [2] Eph. iv. 3.

that which believers know as our ransom.[1] The apostles bear with false apostles; and in the midst of men who sought their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ, Paul, not seeking his own, but the things of Christ, lives in the practice of a most noble toleration. In fine, as I mentioned a little while ago, the person presiding under the title of Angel over a Church, is commended, because, though he hated those that were evil, he yet bore with them for the Lord's name's sake, even when they were tried and discovered.

24. In conclusion, let them ask themselves: Do they not bear with the murders and devastations by fire which are perpetrated by the Circumcelliones, who treat with honour the dead bodies of those who cast themselves down from dangerous heights? Do they not bear with the misery which has made all Africa groan for years beneath the incredible outrages of one man, Optatus [bishop of Thamugada]? I forbear from specifying the tyrannical acts of violence and public depredations in districts, towns, and properties throughout Africa; for it is better to leave you to speak of these to each other, whether in whispers or openly, as you please. For wherever you turn your eyes, you will find the things of which I speak, or, more correctly, refrain from speaking. Nor do we on this ground accuse those whom, when they do such things, you love. What we dislike in that party is not their bearing with those who are wicked, but their intolerable wickedness in the matter of schism, of raising altar against altar, and of separation from the heritage of Christ now spread, as was so long ago promised, throughout the world. We behold with grief and lamentation peace broken, unity rent asunder, baptism administered a second time, and contempt poured on the sacraments, which are holy even when ministered and received by the wicked. If they regard these things as trifles, let them observe those examples by which it has been proved how they are esteemed by God. The men who made an idol perished by a common death, being slain with

[1] Augustine holds that Judas was present at the institution of the Lord's Supper. See Letter XLIV. sec. 10, p. 169.

the sword;[1] but when men endeavoured to make a schism in Israel, the leaders were swallowed up by the opening earth, and the crowd of their accomplices was consumed by fire.[2] In the difference between the punishments, the different degrees of demerit may be discerned.

CHAP. IX. 25. These, then, are the facts: In time of persecution, the sacred books are surrendered to the persecutors. Those who were guilty of this surrender confess it, and are remitted to the divine tribunal; those who were innocent are not examined, but condemned at once by rash men. The integrity of that one who, of all the men thus condemned in their absence, was the most vehemently accused, is afterwards vindicated before unimpeachable judges. From the decision of bishops an appeal is made to the Emperor; the Emperor is chosen judge; and the sentence of the Emperor, when pronounced, is set at naught. What was then done you have read; what is now being done you have before your eyes. If, after all that you have read, you are still in doubt, be convinced by what you see. By all means let us give up arguing from ancient manuscripts, public archives, or the acts of courts, civil or ecclesiastical. We have a greater book—the world itself. In it I read the accomplishment of that of which I read the promise in the Book of God: "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee: ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession."[3] He that has not communion with this inheritance may know himself to be disinherited, whatever books he may plead to the contrary. He that assails this inheritance is plainly enough declared to be an outcast from the family of God. The question is raised as to the parties guilty of surrendering the divine books in which that inheritance is promised. Let him be believed to have delivered the testament to the flames, who is resisting the intentions of the testator. O faction of Donatus, what has the Corinthian Church done against you? In speaking of this one Church, I wish to be understood as asking the same question in regard to all similar churches remote from you. What have these churches done against you, which

[1] Ex. xxxii. 27, 28. [2] Num. xvi. 31, 35. [3] Ps. ii. 7, 8.

could not know even what you had done, or the names of the men whom you branded with condemnation? Or is it so, that because Cæcilianus gave offence to Lucilla in Africa, the light of Christ is lost to the whole world?[1]

26. Let them at last become sensible of what they have done; for in the lapse of years, by a just retribution, their work has recoiled upon themselves. Ask by what woman's instigation Maximianus[2] (said to be a kinsman of Donatus) withdrew himself from the communion of Primianus, and how, having gathered a faction of bishops, he pronounced sentence against Primianus in his absence, and had himself ordained as a rival bishop in his place,—precisely as Majorinus, under the influence of Lucilla, assembled a faction of bishops, and, having condemned Cæcilianus in his absence, was ordained bishop in opposition to him. Do you admit, as I suppose you do, that when Primianus was delivered by the other bishops of his communion in Africa from the sentence pronounced by the faction of Maximianus, this decision was valid and sufficient? And will you refuse to admit the same in the case of Cæcilianus, when he was released by the bishops of the same one Church beyond the sea from the sentence pronounced by the faction of Majorinus? Pray, my brethren, what great thing do I ask of you? What difficulty is there in comprehending what I bring before you? The African Church, if it be compared with the churches in other parts of the world, is very different from them, and is left far behind both in numbers and in influence; and even if it had retained its unity, is far smaller when compared with the universal Church in other nations, than was the faction of Maximianus when compared with that of Primianus. I ask, however, only this—and I believe it to be just—that you give no more weight to the Council of Secundus of Tigisis, which Lucilla stirred up against Cæcilianus when absent, and against an apostolic see and the whole world in communion with Cæcilianus, than you give to the Council of Maximianus, which in like manner some other woman stirred up against Primianus when absent, and against

[1] The original has a play on the words Lucillam and Lucem.

[2] A deacon in the Donatist communion at Carthage. This matter is more fully gone into by Augustine in his second sermon on Ps. xxxvi.

the rest of the multitude throughout Africa which was in communion with him. What case could be more transparent? what demand more just?

27. You see and know all these things, and you groan over them; and yet God at the same time sees that nothing compels you to remain in such fatal and impious schism, if you would but subdue the lust of the flesh in order to win the spiritual kingdom; and in order to escape from eternal punishment, have courage to forfeit the friendship of men, whose favour will not avail at the bar of God. Go now, and take counsel together: find what you can say in reply to that which I have written. If you bring forward manuscripts on your side, we do the same; if your party say that our documents are not to be trusted, let them not take it amiss if we retort the charge. No one can erase from heaven the divine decree, no one can efface from earth the Church of God. His decree has promised the whole world, and the Church has filled it; and it includes both bad and good. On earth it loses none but the bad, and into heaven it admits none but the good.

In writing this discourse, God is my witness with what sincere love to peace and to you I have taken and used that which He has given. It shall be to you a means of correction if you be willing, and a testimony against you whether you will or not.

LETTER XLIV.

(A.D. 398.)

TO MY LORDS MOST BELOVED, AND BRETHREN WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE, ELEUSIUS, GLORIUS, AND THE TWO FELIXES, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

CHAP. I. 1. In passing through Tubursi on my way to the church at Cirta, though pressed for time, I visited Fortunius, your bishop there, and found him to be, in truth, just such a man as you were wont most kindly to lead me to expect. When I sent him notice of your conversation with me concerning him, and expressed a desire to see him, he did not decline the visit. I therefore went to him, because I thought it due to

his age that I should go to him, instead of insisting upon his first coming to me. I went, therefore, accompanied by a considerable number of persons, who, as it happened, were at that time beside me. When, however, we had taken our seats in his house, the thing becoming known, a considerable addition was made to the crowd assembled; but in that whole multitude there appeared to me to be very few who desired the matter to be discussed in a sound and profitable manner, or with the deliberation and solemnity which so great a question demands. All the others had come rather in the mood of playgoers, expecting a scene in our debates, than in Christian seriousness of spirit, seeking instruction in regard to salvation. Accordingly they could neither favour us with silence when we spoke, nor speak with care, or even with due regard to decorum and order,—excepting, as I have said, those few persons about whose pious and sincere interest in the matter there was no doubt. Everything was therefore thrown into confusion by the noise of men speaking loudly, and each according to the unchecked impulse of his own feelings; and though both Fortunius and I used entreaty and remonstrance, we utterly failed in persuading them to listen silently to what was spoken.

2. The discussion of the question was opened notwithstanding, and for some hours we persevered, speeches being delivered by each side in turn, so far as was permitted by an occasional respite from the voices of the noisy onlookers. In the beginning of the debate, perceiving that things which had been spoken were liable to be forgotten by myself, or by those about whose salvation I was deeply concerned; being desirous also that our debate should be managed with caution and self-restraint, and that both you and other brethren who were absent might be able to learn from a record what passed in the discussion, I demanded that our words should be taken down by reporters. This was for a long time resisted, either by Fortunius or by those on his side. At length, however, he agreed to it; but the reporters who were present, and were able to do the work thoroughly, declined, for some reason unknown to me, to take notes. I urged then, that at least the brethren who accompanied me, though not so expert in the work, should take notes, and promised that I would leave the

tablets on which the notes were taken in the hands of the other party. This was agreed to. Some words of mine were first taken down, and some statements on the other side were dictated and recorded. After that, the reporters, not being able to endure the disorderly interruptions vociferated by the opposing party, and the increased vehemence with which under this pressure our side maintained the debate, gave up their task. This, however, did not close the discussion, many things being still said by each as he obtained an opportunity. This discussion of the whole question, or at least so much of all that was said as I can remember, I have resolved, my beloved friends, that you shall not lose; and you may read this letter to Fortunius, that he may either confirm my statements as true, or himself inform you, without hesitation, of anything which his more accurate recollection suggests.

CHAP. II. 3. He was pleased to begin with commending my manner of life, which he said he had come to know through your statements (in which I am sure there was more kindness than truth), adding that he had remarked to you that I might have done well all the things which you had told him of me, if I had done them within the Church. I thereupon asked him what was the Church within which it was the duty of a man so to live; whether it was that one which, as Sacred Scripture had long foretold, was spread over the whole world, or that one which a small section of Africans, or a small part of Africa, contained. To this he at first attempted to reply, that his communion was in all parts of the earth. I asked him whether he was able to issue letters of communion, which we call regular,[1] to places which I might select; and I affirmed, what was obvious to all, that in this way the question might be most simply settled. In the event of his agreeing to this, my intention was that we should send such letters to those churches which we both knew, on the authority of the apostles, to have been already founded in their time.

4. As the falsity of his statement, however, was apparent, a hasty retreat from it was made in a cloud of confused words, in the midst of which he quoted the Lord's words: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but

[1] Formatæ.

inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits."[1] When I said that these words of the Lord might also be applied by us to them, he went on to magnify the persecution which he affirmed that his party had often suffered; intending thereby to prove that his party were Christians because they endured persecution. When I was preparing, as he went on with this, to answer him from the Gospel, he himself anticipated me in bringing forward the passage in which the Lord says: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."[2] Thanking him for the apt quotation, I immediately added that this behoved therefore to be inquired into, whether they had indeed suffered persecution for righteousness' sake. In following up this inquiry I wished this to be ascertained, though indeed it was patent to all, whether the persecutions under Macarius[3] fell upon them while they were within the unity of the Church, or after they had been severed from it by schism; so that those who wished to see whether they had suffered persecution for righteousness' sake might turn rather to the prior question, whether they had done rightly in cutting themselves off from the unity of the whole world. For if they were found in this to have done wrong, it was manifest that they suffered persecution for unrighteousness' sake rather than for righteousness' sake, and could not therefore be numbered among those of whom it is said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." Thereupon mention was made of the surrender of the sacred books, a matter about which much more has been spoken than has ever been proved true. On our side it was said in reply, that their leaders rather than ours had been traditors; but that if they would not believe the documents with which we supported this charge, we could not be compelled to accept those which they brought forward.

CHAP. III. 5. Having therefore laid aside that question as

[1] Matt. vii. 15, 16. [2] Matt. v. 10.

[3] Macarius was sent in A.D. 348 by the Emperor Constans to Africa, to exhort all to cherish the unity of the Catholic Church, and at the same time to collect for the relief of the poor. The vehement opposition with which the Donatists met him led to conflicts and bloodshed, the Donatists claiming the honour of martyrdom for all of their party who fell in fighting with the imperial soldiers.

one on which there was a doubt, I asked how they could justify their separation of themselves from all other Christians who had done them no wrong, who throughout the world preserved the order of succession, and were established in the most ancient churches, but had no knowledge whatever as to who were traditors in Africa; and who assuredly could not hold communion with others than those whom they had heard of as occupying the episcopal sees. He answered that the foreign churches had done them no wrong, up to the time when they had consented to the death of those who, as he had said, had suffered in the Macarian persecution. Here I might have said that it was impossible for the innocence of the foreign churches to be affected by the offence given in the time of Macarius, seeing that it could not be proved that he had done with their sanction what he did. I preferred, however, to save time by asking whether, supposing that the foreign churches had, through the cruelties of Macarius, lost their innocence from the time in which they were said to have approved of these, it could even be proved that up to that time the Donatists had remained in unity with the Eastern churches and other parts of the world.

6. Thereupon he produced a certain volume, by which he wished to show that a Council at Sardica had sent a letter to African bishops who belonged to the party of Donatus. When this was read aloud, I heard the name Donatus among the bishops to whom the writing had been sent. I therefore insisted upon being told whether this was the Donatus from whom their faction takes its name; as it was possible that they had written to some bishop named Donatus belonging to another section [heresy], especially since in these names no mention had been made of Africa. How then, I asked, could it be proved that we must believe the Donatus here named to be the Donatist bishop, when it could not even be proved that this letter had been specially directed to bishops in Africa? For although Donatus is a common African name, there is nothing improbable in the supposition, that either some one in other countries should be found bearing an African name, or that a native of Africa should be made a bishop there. We found, moreover, no day or name of consul

given in the letter, from which any certain light might have been furnished by comparison of dates. I had indeed once heard that the Arians, when they had separated from the Catholic communion, had endeavoured to ally the Donatists in Africa with themselves; and my brother Alypius recalled this to me at the time in a whisper. Having then taken up the volume itself, and glancing over the decrees of the said Council, I read that Athanasius, Catholic bishop of Alexandria, who was so conspicuous as a debater in the keen controversies with the Arians, and Julius, bishop of the Roman Church, also a Catholic, had been condemned by that Council of Sardica; from which we were sure that it was a Council of Arians, against which heretics these Catholic bishops had contended with singular fervour. I therefore wished to take up and carry with me the volume, in order to give more pains to find out the date of the Council. He refused it, however, saying that I could get it there if I wished to study anything in it. I asked also that he would allow me to mark the volume; for I feared, I confess, lest, if perchance necessity arose for my asking to consult it, another should be substituted in its room. This also he refused.

CHAP. IV. 7. Thereafter he began to insist upon my answering categorically this question: Whether I thought the persecutor or the persecuted to be in the right? To which I answered, that the question was not fairly stated: it might be that both were in the wrong, or that the persecution might be made by the one who was the more righteous of the two parties; and therefore it was not always right to infer that one is on the better side because he suffers persecution, although that is almost always the case. When I perceived that he still laid great stress upon this, wishing to have the justice of the cause of his party acknowledged as beyond dispute because they had suffered persecution, I asked him whether he believed Ambrose, bishop of the Church of Milan, to be a righteous man and a Christian? He was compelled to deny expressly that that man was a Christian and a righteous man; for if he had admitted this, I would at once have objected to him that he esteemed it necessary for him to be rebaptized. When, therefore, he was compelled to pronounce

concerning Ambrose that he was not a Christian nor a righteous man, I related the persecution which he endured when his church was surrounded with soldiers. I also asked whether Maximianus, who had made a schism from their party at Carthage, was in his view a righteous man and a Christian. He could not but deny this. I therefore reminded him that he had endured such persecution that his church had been razed to the foundations. By these instances I laboured to persuade him, if possible, to give up affirming that the suffering of persecution is the most infallible mark of Christian righteousness.

8. He also related that, in the infancy of their schism, his predecessors, being anxious to devise some way of hushing up the fault of Cæcilianus, lest a schism should take place, had appointed over the people belonging to his communion in Carthage an interim bishop before Majorinus was ordained in opposition to Cæcilianus. He alleged that this interim bishop was murdered in his own meeting-house by our party. This, I confess, I had never heard before, though so many charges brought by them against us have been refuted and disproved, while by us greater and more numerous crimes have been alleged against them. After having narrated this story, he began again to insist on my answering whether in this case I thought the murderer or the victim the more righteous man; as if he had already proved that the event had taken place as he had stated. I therefore said that we must first ascertain the truth of the story, for we ought not to believe without examination all that is said; and that even were it true, it was possible either that both were equally bad, or that one who was bad had caused the death of another yet worse than himself. For, in truth, it is possible that his guilt is more heinous who rebaptizes the whole man than his who kills the body only.

9. After this there was no occasion for the question which he afterwards put to me. He affirmed that even a bad man should not be killed by Christians and righteous men; as if we called those who in the Catholic Church do such things righteous men: a statement, moreover, which it is more easy for them to affirm than to prove to us, so long as they themselves, with few exceptions, bishops, presbyters, and clergy of

all kinds, go on gathering mobs of most infatuated men, and causing, wherever they are able, so many violent massacres, and devastations to the injury not of Catholics only, but sometimes even of their own partisans. In spite of these facts, Fortunius, affecting ignorance of their most villanous doings, which were better known by him than by me, insisted upon my giving an example of a righteous man putting even a bad man to death. This was, of course, not relevant to the matter in hand; for I conceded that wherever such crimes were committed by men having the name of Christians, they were not the actions of good men. Nevertheless, in order to show him what was the true question before us, I answered by inquiring whether Elijah seemed to him to be a righteous man; to which he could not but assent. Thereupon I reminded him how many false prophets Elijah slew with his own hand.[1] He saw plainly herein, as indeed he could not but see, that such things were then lawful to righteous men. For they did these things as prophets guided by the Spirit and sanctioned by the authority of God, who knows infallibly to whom it may be even a benefit to be put to death.[2] He therefore required me to show him one who, being a righteous man, had in the New Testament times put any one, even a criminal and impious man, to death.

CHAP. V. 10. I then returned to the argument used in my former letter,[3] in which I laboured to show that it was not right either for us to reproach them with atrocities of which some of their party had been guilty, or for them to reproach us if any such deeds were found by them to have been done on our side. For I granted that no example could be produced from the New Testament of a righteous man putting any one to death; but I insisted that by the example of our Lord Himself, it could be proved that the wicked had been tolerated by the innocent. For His own betrayer, who had already received the price of His blood, He suffered to remain undistinguished from the innocent who were with Him, even up to that last kiss of peace. He did not conceal from the disciples the fact that in the midst of them was one capable

[1] 1 Kings xviii. 40.
[2] Qui novit cui etiam prosit occidi.
[3] Let. XLIII. pp. 157, 158.

of such a crime; and, nevertheless, He administered to them all alike, without excluding the traitor, the first sacrament of His body and blood.[1] When almost all felt the force of this argument, Fortunius attempted to meet it by saying, that before the Lord's Passion that communion with a wicked man did no harm to the apostles, because they had not as yet the baptism of Christ, but the baptism of John only. When he said this, I asked him to explain how it was written that Jesus baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples, that is to say, baptized by means of His disciples?[2] How could they give what they had not received (a question often used by the Donatists themselves)? Did Christ baptize with the baptism of John? I was prepared to ask many other questions in connection with this opinion of Fortunius; such as—how John himself was interrogated as to the Lord's baptizing, and replied that He had the bride, and was the Bridegroom?[3] Was it, then, lawful for the Bridegroom to baptize with the baptism of him who was but a friend or servant? Again, how could they receive the Eucharist if not previously baptized? or how could the Lord in that case have said in reply to Peter, who was willing to be wholly washed by Him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit"?[4] For perfect cleansing is by the baptism, not of John, but of the Lord, if the person receiving it be worthy; if, however, he be unworthy, the sacraments abide in him, not to his salvation, but to his perdition. When I was about to put these questions, Fortunius himself saw that he ought not to have mooted the subject of the baptism of the disciples of the Lord.

11. From this we passed to something else, many on both sides discoursing to the best of their ability. Among other things it was alleged that our party was still intending to persecute them; and he [Fortunius] said that he would like to see how I would act in the event of such persecution, whether I would consent to such cruelty, or withhold from it all countenance. I said that God saw my heart, which was unseen by them; also that they had hitherto had no ground for apprehending such persecution, which if it did take place would be the

[1] Matt. xxvi. 20–28. [2] John iv. 1, 2. [3] John iii. 29. [4] John xiii. 10.

work of bad men, who were, however, not so bad as some of their own party; but that it was not incumbent on us to withdraw ourselves from communion with the Catholic Church on the ground of anything done against our will, and even in spite of our opposition (if we had an opportunity of testifying against it), seeing that we had learned that toleration for the sake of peace which the apostle prescribes in the words: "Forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."[1] I affirmed that they had not preserved this peace and forbearance, when they had caused a schism, within which, moreover, the more moderate among them now tolerated more serious evils, lest that which was already a fragment should be broken again, although they did not, in order to preserve unity, consent to exercise forbearance in smaller things. I also said that in the ancient economy the peace of unity and forbearance had not been so fully declared and commended as it is now by the example of the Lord and the charity of the New Testament; and yet prophets and holy men were wont to protest against the sins of the people, without endeavouring to separate themselves from the unity of the Jewish people, and from communion in partaking along with them of the sacraments then appointed.

12. After that, mention was made, I know not in what connection, of Genethlius of blessed memory, the predecessor of Aurelius in the see of Carthage, because he had suppressed some edict granted against the Donatists, and had not suffered it to be carried into effect. They were all praising and commending him with the utmost kindness. I interrupted their commendatory speeches with the remark that, for all this, if Genethlius himself had fallen into their hands, it would have been declared necessary to baptize him a second time. (We were by this time all standing, as the time of our going away was at hand.) On this the old man said plainly, that a rule had now been made, according to which every believer who went over from us to them must be baptized; but he said this with the most manifest reluctance and sincere regret. When he himself most frankly bewailed many of the evil deeds of his party, making evident, as was further proved by the testi-

[1] Eph. iv. 2, 3.

mony of the whole community, how far he was from sharing in such transactions, and told us what he was wont to say in mild expostulation to those of his own party; when also I had quoted the words of Ezekiel—"As the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die"[1]—in which it is written that the son's fault is not to be reckoned to his father, nor the father's fault reckoned to his son, it was agreed by all that in such discussions the excesses of bad men ought not to be brought forward by either party against the other. There remained, therefore, only the question as to schism. I therefore exhorted him that again and again he should with tranquil and undisturbed mind join me in an effort to bring to a satisfactory end, by diligent research, the examination of so important a matter. When he kindly replied that I myself sought this with a single eye, but that others who were on my side were averse to such examination of the truth, I left him with this promise, that I would bring to him more of my colleagues, ten at least, who desire this question to be sifted with the same good-will and calmness and pious care which I saw that he had discovered and now commended in myself. He gave me a similar promise regarding a like number of his colleagues.

CHAP. VI. 13. Wherefore I exhort you, and by the blood of the Lord implore you, to put him in mind of his promise, and to insist urgently that what has been begun, and is now, as you see, nearly finished, may be concluded. For, in my opinion, you will have difficulty in finding among your bishops another whose judgment and feelings are so sound as we have seen that old man's to be. The next day he came to me himself, and we began to discuss the matter again. I could not, however, remain long with him, as the ordination of a bishop required my departing from the place. I had already sent a messenger to the chief man of the Cœlicolæ,[2] of whom I had heard that he had introduced a new baptism among them, and had by this impiety led many astray, intending, so far as my limited time permitted, to confer with him. Fortunius, when he learned

[1] Ezek. xviii. 4.

[2] The Cœlicolæ are mentioned in some laws of Honorius as heretics whose heresy, if they refused to abandon it, involved them in civil penalties.

that he was coming, perceiving that I was to be otherwise engaged, and having himself some other duty calling him from home, bade me a kind and friendly farewell.

14. It seems to me that if we would avoid the attendance of a noisy crowd, rather hindering than helping the debate, and if we wish to complete by the Lord's help so great a work begun in a spirit of unfeigned good-will and peace, we ought to meet in some small village in which neither party has a church, and which is inhabited by persons belonging to both churches, such as Titia. Let this or any other such place be agreed upon in the region of Tubursi or of Thagaste, and let us take care to have the canonical books at hand for reference. Let any other documents be brought thither which either party may judge useful; and laying all other things aside, uninterrupted, if it please God, by other cares, devoting our time for as many days as we can to this one work, and each imploring in private the Lord's guidance, we may, by the help of Him to whom Christian peace is most sweet, bring to a happy termination the inquiry which has been in such a good spirit opened. Do not fail to write in reply what you or Fortunius think of this.

LETTER XLV.

A short letter to Paulinus and Therasia repeating the request made in Letter XLII., and again complaining of the long silence of his friend.

LETTER XLVI.

(A.D. 398.)

A letter propounding several cases of conscience.

TO MY BELOVED AND VENERABLE FATHER THE BISHOP AUGUSTINE, PUBLICOLA SENDS GREETING.

It is written: "Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee."[1] I have therefore judged it right to "seek the law at the mouth of the priest" in regard to a certain case which I shall state in this letter, desiring at the same time to be instructed in regard to several other matters. I have distinguished the several questions by stating each in

[1] Deut. xxxii. 7.

a separate paragraph, and I beg you kindly to give an answer to each in order.

I. In the country of the Arzuges it is customary, as I have heard, for the barbarians to take an oath, swearing by their false gods, in the presence of the decurion stationed on the frontier or of the tribune, when they have come under engagement to carry baggage to any part, or to protect the crops from depredation; and when the decurion certifies in writing that this oath has been taken, the owners or farmers of land employ them as watchmen of their crops; or travellers who have occasion to pass through their country hire them, as if assured of their now being trustworthy. Now a doubt has arisen in my mind whether the landowner who thus employs a barbarian, of whose fidelity he is persuaded in consequence of such an oath, does not make himself and the crops committed to that man's charge to share the defilement of that sinful oath; and so also with the traveller who may employ his services. I should mention, however, that in both cases the barbarian is rewarded for his services with money. Nevertheless in both transactions there comes in, besides the pecuniary remuneration, this oath before the decurion or tribune involving mortal sin. I am concerned as to whether this sin does not defile either him who accepts the oath of the barbarian, or at least the things which are committed to the barbarian's keeping. For whatever other terms be in the arrangement, even such as the payment of gold, and giving of hostages in security, nevertheless this sinful oath has been a real part of the transaction. Be pleased to resolve my doubts definitely and positively. For if your answer indicate that you are in doubt yourself, I may fall into greater perplexity than before.

II. I have also heard that my own land-stewards receive from the barbarians hired to protect the crops an oath in which they appeal to their false gods. Does not this oath so defile these crops, that if a Christian uses them or takes the money realized by their sale, he is himself defiled? Do answer this.

III. Again, I have heard from one person that no oath was taken by the barbarian in making agreement with my steward, but another has said to me that such an oath was taken. Suppose now that the latter statement were false, tell me if I

am bound to forbear from using these crops, or the money obtained for them, merely because I have heard the statement made, according to the scriptural rule: "If any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that showed it."[1] Is this case parallel to the case of meat offered to idols; and if it is, what am I to do with the crops, or with the price of them?

IV. In this case ought I to examine both him who said that no oath was taken before my steward, and the other who said that the oath was taken, and bring witnesses to prove which of the two spoke truly, leaving the crops or their price untouched so long as there is uncertainty in the matter?

V. If the barbarian who swears this sinful oath were to require of the steward or of the tribune stationed on the frontier, that he, being a Christian, should give him assurance of his faithfulness to his part of the engagement about watching the crops, by the same oath which he himself has taken, involving mortal sin, does the oath pollute only that Christian man? Does it not also pollute the things regarding which he took the oath? Or if a pagan who has authority on the frontier thus give to a barbarian this oath in token of acting faithfully to him, does he not involve in the defilement of his own sin those in whose interest he swears? If I send a man to the Arzuges, is it lawful for him to take from a barbarian that sinful oath? Is not the Christian who takes such an oath from him also defiled by his sin?

VI. Is it lawful for a Christian to use wheat or beans from the threshing-floor, wine or oil from the press, if, with his knowledge, some part of what has been taken thence was offered in sacrifice to a false god?

VII. May a Christian use for any purpose wood which he knows to have been taken from one of their idols' groves?

VIII. If a Christian buy in the market meat which has not been offered to idols, and have in his mind conflicting doubts as to whether it has been offered to idols or not, but eventually adopt the opinion that it was not, does he sin if he partake of this meat?

IX. If a man does an action good in itself, about which he

[1] 1 Cor. x. 28.

has some misgivings as to whether it is good or bad, can it be reckoned as a sin to him if he does it believing it to be good, although formerly he may have thought it bad?

X. If any one has falsely said that some meat has been offered to idols, and afterwards confess that it was a falsehood, and this confession is believed, may a Christian use the meat regarding which he heard that statement, or sell it, and use the price obtained?

XI. If a Christian on a journey, overpowered by want, having fasted for one, two, or several days, so that he can no longer endure the privation, should by chance, when in the last extremity of hunger, and when he sees death close at hand, find food placed in an idol's temple, where there is no man near him, and no other food to be found; whether should he die or partake of that food?

XII. If a Christian is on the point of being killed by a barbarian or a Roman, ought he to kill the aggressor to save his own life? or ought he even, without killing the assailant, to drive him back and fight with him, seeing it has been said, "Resist not evil"?[1]

XIII. May a Christian put a wall for defence against an enemy round his property? and if some use that wall as a place from which to fight and kill the enemy, is the Christian the cause of the homicide?

XIV. May a Christian drink at a fountain or well into which anything from a sacrifice has been cast? May he drink from a well found in a deserted temple? If there be in a temple where an idol is worshipped a well or fountain which nothing has defiled, may he draw water thence, and drink of it?

XV. May a Christian use baths[2] in places in which sacrifice is offered to images? May he use baths which are used by pagans on a feast-day, either while they are there or after they have left?

XVI. May a Christian use the same sedan-chair[3] as has been used by pagans coming down from their idols on a feast-day, if in that chair they have performed any part of their idolatrous service, and the Christian is aware of this?

[1] Matt. v. 39.

[2] Balneis vel thermis.

[3] The Benedictine Fathers translate this, in their note, sitz-bath.

XVII. If a Christian, being the guest of another, has forborne from using meat set before him, concerning which it was said to him that it had been offered in sacrifice, but afterwards by some accident finds the same meat for sale and buys it, or has it presented to him at another man's table, and then eat of it, without knowing that it is the same, is he guilty of sin?

XVIII. May a Christian buy and use vegetables or fruit which he knows to have been brought from the garden of a temple or of the priests of an idol?

That you may not be put to trouble in searching the Scriptures concerning the oath of which I have spoken and the idols, I resolved to set before you those texts which, by the Lord's help, I have found; but if you have found anything better or more to the purpose in Scripture, be so good as let me know. For example, when Laban said to Jacob, "The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor judge betwixt us,"[1] Scripture does not declare which god is meant. Again, when Abimelech came to Isaac, and he and those who were with him sware to Isaac, we are not told what kind of oath it was.[2] As to the idols, Gideon was commanded by the Lord to make a whole burnt-offering of the bullock which he killed.[3] And in the book of Joshua the son of Nun, it is said of Jericho that all the silver, and gold, and brass should be brought into the treasures of the Lord, and the things found in the accursed city were called sacred.[4] Also we read in Deuteronomy:[5] "Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it."

May the Lord preserve thee. I salute thee. Pray for me.

LETTER XLVII.

(A.D. 398.)

TO THE HONOURABLE PUBLICOLA, MY MUCH BELOVED SON, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. YOUR perplexities have, since I learned them by your letter, become mine also, not because all those things by which you

[1] Gen. xxxi. 53. [2] Gen. xxvi. 31. [3] Judg. vi. 26.
[4] Josh. vi. 19. [5] Deut. vii. 26.

tell me that you are disturbed, disturb my mind: but I have been much perplexed, I confess, by the question how your perplexities were to be removed; especially since you require me to give a conclusive answer, lest you should fall into greater doubts than you had before you applied to me to have them resolved. For I see that I cannot give this, since, though I may write things which appear to me most certain, if I do not convince you, you must be beyond question more at a loss than before; and though it is in my power to use arguments which weigh with myself, I may fail of convincing another by these. However, lest I should refuse the small service which your love claims, I have resolved after some consideration to write in reply.

2. One of your doubts is as to using the services of a man who has guaranteed his fidelity by swearing by his false gods. In this matter I beg you to consider whether, in the event of a man failing to keep his word after having pledged himself by such an oath, you would not regard him as guilty of a twofold sin. For if he kept the engagement which he had confirmed by this oath, he would be pronounced guilty in this only, that he swore by such deities; but no one would justly blame him for keeping his engagement. But in the case supposed, seeing that he both swore by those whom he should not worship, and did, notwithstanding his promise, what he should not have done, he was guilty of two sins: whence it is obvious that in using, not for an evil work, but for some good and lawful end, the service of a man whose fidelity is known to have been confirmed by an oath in the name of false gods, one participates, not in the sin of swearing by the false gods, but in the good faith with which he keeps his promise. The faith which I here speak of as kept is not that on account of which those who are baptized in Christ are called faithful: that is entirely different and far removed from the faith desiderated in regard to the arrangements and compacts of men. Nevertheless it is, beyond all doubt, worse to swear falsely by the true God than to swear truly by the false gods; for the greater the holiness of that by which we swear, the greater is the sin of perjury. It is therefore a different question whether he is not guilty who requires another to pledge

himself by taking an oath in the name of his gods, seeing that he worships false gods. In answering this question, we may accept as decisive those examples which you yourself quoted of Laban and of Abimelech (if Abimelech did swear by his gods, as Laban swore by the god of Nahor). This is, as I have said, another question, and one which would perchance perplex me, were it not for those examples of Isaac and Jacob, to which, for aught I know, others might be added. It may be that some scruple might yet be suggested by the precept in the New Testament, "Swear not at all;"[1] words which were in my opinion spoken, not because it is a sin to swear a true oath, but because it is a heinous sin to forswear oneself: from which crime our Lord would have us keep at a great distance, when He charged us not to swear at all. I know, however, that your opinion is different: wherefore it should not be discussed at present; let us rather treat of that about which you have thought of asking my advice. On the same ground on which you forbear from swearing yourself, you may, if such be your opinion, regard it as forbidden to exact an oath from another, although it is expressly said, Swear not; but I do not remember reading anywhere in Holy Scripture that we are not to take another's oath. The question whether we ought to take advantage of the concord which is established between other parties by their exchange of oaths is entirely different. If we answer this in the negative, I know not whether we could find any place on earth in which we could live. For not only on the frontier, but throughout all the provinces, the security of peace rests on the oaths of barbarians. And from this it would follow, that not only the crops which are guarded by men who have sworn fidelity in the name of their false gods, but all things which enjoy the protection secured by the peace which a similar oath has ratified, are defiled. If this be admitted by you to be a complete absurdity, dismiss with it your doubts on the cases which you named.

3. Again, if from the threshing-floor or wine-press of a Christian anything be taken, with his knowledge, to be offered to false gods, he is guilty in permitting this to be done, if it be in his power to prevent it. If he finds that it has been

[1] Matt. v. 34, 36.

done, or has not the power to prevent it, he uses without scruple the rest of the grain or wine, as uncontaminated, just as we use fountains from which we know that water has been taken to be used in idol-worship. The same principle decides the question about baths. For we have no scruple about inhaling the air into which we know that the smoke from all the altars and incense of idolaters ascends. From which it is manifest, that the thing forbidden is our devoting anything to the honour of the false gods, or appearing to do this by so acting as to encourage in such worship those who do not know our mind, although in our heart we despise their idols. And when temples, idols, groves, etc., are thrown down by permission from the authorities, although our taking part in this work is a clear proof of our not honouring, but rather abhorring, these things, we must nevertheless forbear from appropriating any of them to our own personal and private use; so that it may be manifest that in overthrowing these we are influenced, not by greed, but by piety. When, however, the spoils of these places are applied to the benefit of the community or devoted to the service of God, they are dealt with in the same manner as the men themselves when they are turned from impiety and sacrilege to the true religion. We understand this to be the will of God from the examples quoted by yourself: the grove of the false gods from which He commanded wood to be taken [by Gideon] for the burnt-offering; and Jericho, of which all the gold, silver, and brass was to be brought into the Lord's treasury. Hence also the precept in Deuteronomy: "Thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou become a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing."[1] From which it appears plainly, that either the appropriation of such spoils to their own private use was absolutely forbidden, or they were forbidden to carry anything of that kind into their own houses with the intention of giving to it honour; for then this would be an abomination and accursed in the

[1] Deut. vii. 25, 26.

sight of God; whereas the honour impiously given to such idols is, by their public destruction, utterly abolished.

4. As to meats offered to idols, I assure you we have no duty beyond observing what the apostle taught concerning them. Study, therefore, his words on the subject, which, if they were obscure to you, I would explain as well as I could. He does not sin who, unwittingly, afterwards partakes of food which he formerly refused because it had been offered to an idol. A kitchen-herb, or any other fruit of the ground, belongs to Him who created it; for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and "every creature of God is good."[1] But if that which the earth has borne is consecrated or offered to an idol, then we must reckon it among the things offered to idols. We must beware lest, in pronouncing that we ought not to eat the fruits of a garden belonging to an idol-temple, we be involved in the inference that it was wrong for the apostle to take food in Athens, since that city belonged to Minerva, and was consecrated to her as the guardian deity. The same answer I would give as to the well or fountain enclosed in a temple, though my scruples would be somewhat more awakened if some part of the sacrifices be thrown into the said well or fountain. But the case is, as I have said before, exactly parallel to our using of the air which receives the smoke of these sacrifices; or, if this be thought to make a difference, that the sacrifice, the smoke whereof mingles with the air, is not offered to the air itself, but to some idol or false god, whereas sometimes offerings are cast into the water with the intention of sacrificing to the waters themselves, it is enough to say that the same principle would preclude us from using the light of the sun, because wicked men continually worship that luminary wherever they are tolerated in doing so. Sacrifices are offered to the winds, which we nevertheless use for our convenience, although they seem, as it were, to inhale and swallow greedily the smoke of these sacrifices. If any one be in doubt regarding meat, whether it has been offered to an idol or not, and the fact be that it has not, when he eats that meat under the impression that it has not been offered to an idol, he by no means does wrong; because neither in fact, nor

[1] Ps. xxiv. 1; 1 Cor. x. 25, 26; and 1 Tim. iv. 4.

now in his judgment, is it food offered to an idol, although he formerly thought it was. For surely it is lawful to correct false impressions by others that are true. But if any one believes that to be good which is evil, and acts accordingly, he sins in entertaining that belief; and these are all sins of ignorance, in which one thinks that to be right which it is wrong for him to do.

5. As to killing others in order to defend one's own life, I do not approve of this, unless one happen to be a soldier or public functionary acting, not for himself, but in defence of others or of the city in which he resides, if he act according to the commission lawfully given him, and in the manner becoming his office.[1] When, however, men are prevented, by being alarmed, from doing wrong, it may be said that a real service is done to themselves. The precept, "Resist not evil,"[2] was given to prevent us from taking pleasure in revenge, in which the mind is gratified by the sufferings of others, but not to make us neglect the duty of restraining men from sin. From this it follows that one is not guilty of homicide, because he has put up a wall round his estate, if any one is killed by the wall falling upon him when he is throwing it down. For a Christian is not guilty of homicide though his ox may gore or his horse kick a man, so that he dies. On such a principle, the oxen of a Christian should have no horns, and his horses no hoofs, and his dogs no teeth. On such a principle, when the Apostle Paul took care to inform the chief captain that an ambush was laid for him by certain desperadoes, and received in consequence an armed escort,[3] if the villains who plotted his death had thrown themselves on the weapons of the soldiers, Paul would have had to acknowledge the shedding of their blood as a crime with which he was chargeable. God forbid that we should be blamed for accidents which, without our desire, happen to others through things done by us or found in our possession, which are in themselves good and lawful. In that event, we ought to have no iron implements

[1] For Augustine's mature view on this subject, see his work, *De Libero Arbitrio*, i. 5. 13: "That it is wrong to shed the blood of our fellow-men in defence of those things which ought to be despised by us."

[2] Matt. v. 39.

[3] Acts xxiii. 17–24.

for the house or the field, lest some one should by them lose his own life or take another's; no tree or rope on our premises, lest some one hang himself; no window in our house, lest some one throw himself down from it. But why mention more in a list which must be interminable? For what good and lawful thing is there in use among men which may not become chargeable with being an instrument of destruction?

6. I have now only to notice (unless I am mistaken) the case which you mentioned of a Christian on a journey overcome by the extremity of hunger; whether, if he could find nothing to eat but meat placed in an idol's temple, and there was no man near to relieve him, it would be better for him to die of starvation than to take that food for his nourishment? Since in this question it is not assumed that the food thus found was offered to the idol (for it might have been left by mistake or designedly by persons who, on a journey, had turned aside there to take refreshment; or it might have been put there for some other purpose), I answer briefly thus: Either it is certain that this food was offered to the idol, or it is certain that it was not, or neither of these things is known. If it is certain, it is better to reject it with Christian fortitude. In either of the other alternatives, it may be used for his necessity without any conscientious scruple.

LETTER XLVIII.

(A.D. 398.)

TO MY LORD EUDOXIUS, MY BROTHER AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER, BELOVED AND LONGED FOR, AND TO THE BRETHREN WHO ARE WITH HIM,[1] AUGUSTINE AND THE BRETHREN WHO ARE HERE SEND GREETING.

1. WHEN we reflect upon the undisturbed rest which you enjoy in Christ, we also, although engaged in labours manifold and arduous, find rest with you, beloved. We are one body under one Head, so that you share our toils, and we share your repose: for "if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or

1 The monastery of these brethren was in the island of Capraria—the same, I suppose, with Caprera—now so widely famous as Garibaldi's home.

if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."[1] Therefore we earnestly exhort and beseech you, by the deep humility and most compassionate majesty of Christ, to be mindful of us in your holy intercessions; for we believe you to be more lively and undistracted in prayer than we can be, whose prayers are often marred and weakened by the darkness and confusion arising from secular occupations: not that we have these on our own account, but we can scarcely breathe for the pressure of such duties imposed upon us by men compelling us, so to speak, to go with them one mile, with whom we are commanded by our Lord to go farther than they ask.[2] We believe, nevertheless, that He before whom the sighing of the prisoner comes[3] will look on us persevering in the ministry in which He was pleased to put us, with promise of reward, and, by the assistance of your prayers, will set us free from all distress.

2. We exhort you in the Lord, brethren, to be stedfast in your purpose, and persevere to the end; and if the Church, your Mother, calls you to active service, guard against accepting it, on the one hand, with too eager elation of spirit, or declining it, on the other, under the solicitations of indolence; and obey God with a lowly heart, submitting yourselves in meekness to Him who governs you, who will guide the meek in judgment, and will teach them His way.[4] Do not prefer your own ease to the claims of the Church; for if no good men were willing to minister to her in her bringing forth of her spiritual children, the beginning of your own spiritual life would have been impossible. As men must keep the way carefully in walking between fire and water, so as to be neither burned nor drowned, so must we order our steps between the pinnacle of pride and the whirlpool of indolence; as it is written, "declining neither to the right hand nor to the left."[5] For some, while guarding too anxiously against being lifted up and raised, as it were, to the dangerous heights on the right hand, have fallen and been engulphed in the depths on the left. Again, others, while turning too eagerly from the danger on the left hand of being immersed in the torpid effeminacy of inaction, are, on the other

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 26. [2] Matt. v. 41. [3] Ps. lxxix. 11.
[4] Ps. xxv. 9. [5] Deut. xvii. 11.

hand, so destroyed and consumed by the extravagance of self-conceit, that they vanish into ashes and smoke. See then, beloved, that in your love of ease you restrain yourselves from all mere earthly delight, and remember that there is no place where the fowler who fears lest we fly back to God may not lay snares for us; let us account him whose captives we once were to be the sworn enemy of all good men; let us never consider ourselves in possession of perfect peace until iniquity shall have ceased, and "judgment shall have returned unto righteousness."[1]

3. Moreover, when you are exerting yourselves with energy and fervour, whatever you do, whether labouring diligently in prayer, fasting, or almsgiving, or distributing to the poor, or forgiving injuries, "as God also for Christ's sake hath forgiven us,"[2] or subduing evil habits, and chastening the body and bringing it into subjection,[3] or bearing tribulation, and especially bearing with one another in love (for what can he bear who is not patient with his brother?), or guarding against the craft and wiles of the tempter, and by the shield of faith averting and extinguishing his fiery darts,[4] or "singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts," or with voices in harmony with your hearts;[5]—whatever you do, I say, "do all to the glory of God,"[6] who "worketh all in all,"[7] and be so "fervent in spirit"[8] that your "soul may make her boast in the Lord."[9] Such is the course of those who walk in the "straight way," whose "eyes are ever upon the Lord, for He shall pluck their feet out of the net."[10] Such a course is neither interrupted by business, nor benumbed by leisure, neither boisterous nor languid, neither presumptuous nor desponding, neither reckless nor supine. "These things do, and the God of peace shall be with you."[11]

4. Let your charity prevent you from accounting me forward in wishing to address you by letter. I remind you of these things, not because I think you come short in them, but because I thought that I would be much commended unto God by you, if, in doing your duty to Him, you do it with a

[1] Ps. lvii. 1 and xciv. 15.
[2] Eph. iv. 32.
[3] 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[4] Eph. vi. 16.
[5] Eph. v. 19.
[6] 1 Cor. x. 31.
[7] 1 Cor. xii. 6.
[8] Rom. xii. 11.
[9] Ps. xxxiv. 2.
[10] Ps. xxv. 15.
[11] Phil. iv. 9.

remembrance of my exhortation. For good report, even before the coming of the brethren Eustasius and Andreas from you, had brought to us, as they did, the good savour of Christ, which is yielded by your holy conversation. Of these, Eustasius has gone before us to that land of rest, on the shore of which beat no rude waves such as those which encompass your island home, and in which he does not regret Caprera, for the homely raiment[1] with which it furnished him he wears no more.

LETTER XLIX.

This letter, written to Honoratus, a Donatist bishop, contains nothing on the Donatist schism which is not already found in Letters XLIII. and XLIV., or supplied in Letter LIII.

LETTER L.[2]

(A.D. 399.)

TO THE MAGISTRATES AND LEADING MEN, OR ELDERS, OF THE COLONY OF SUFFECTUM, BISHOP AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

EARTH reels and heaven trembles at the report of the enormous crime and unprecedented cruelty which has made your streets and temples run red with blood, and ring with the shouts of murderers. You have buried the laws of Rome in a dishonoured grave, and trampled in scorn the reverence due to equitable enactments. The authority of emperors you neither respect nor fear. In your city there has been shed the innocent blood of sixty of our brethren; and whoever approved himself most active in the massacre, was rewarded with your applause, and with a high place in your Council. Come now, let us arrive at the chief pretext for this outrage. If you say that Hercules belonged to you, by all means we will

[1] Cilicium, the garment of goats' hair worn by the brethren. These were the staple article of manufacture in Caprera, "the goat-island."

[2] This letter is found only in the Vatican MS. On this ground, and because of its tone and style, its composition has been ascribed to another hand than Augustine's. The reader may judge for himself. The sixty Christians of Suffectum (a town in the territory of Tunis), whose death is here mentioned, are commemorated in the martyrology of the Roman Catholic Church. Their day in the Calendar is Aug. 30.

make good your loss: we have metals at hand, and there is no lack of stone; nay, we have several varieties of marble, and a host of artisans. Fear not, your god is in the hands of his makers, and shall be with all diligence hewn out and polished and ornamented. We will give in addition some red ochre, to make him blush in such a way as may well harmonize with your devotions. Or if you say that the Hercules must be of your own making, we will raise a subscription in pennies,[1] and buy a god from a workman of your own for you. Only do you at the same time make restitution to us; and as your god Hercules is given back to you, let the lives of the many men whom your violence has destroyed be given back to us.

LETTER LI.

(A.D. 399 OR 400.)

An invitation to Crispinus, Donatist bishop at Calama, to discuss the whole question of the Donatist schism.

(No salutation at the beginning of the letter.)

1. I HAVE adopted this plan in regard to the heading of this letter, because your party are offended by the humility which I have shown in the salutations prefixed to others. I might be supposed to have done it as an insult to you, were it not that I trust that you will do the same in your reply to me. Why should I say much regarding your promise at Carthage, and my urgency to have it fulfilled? Let the manner in which we then acted to each other be forgotten with the past, lest it should obstruct future conference. Now, unless I am mistaken, there is, by the Lord's help, no obstacle in the way; we are both in Numidia, and located at no great distance from each other. I have heard it said that you are still willing to examine, in debate with me, the question which separates us from communion with each other. See how promptly all ambiguities may be cleared away: send me an answer to this letter if you please, and perhaps that may be enough, not only for us, but for those also who desire to hear us; or if it is not, let us exchange letters again and again until the dis-

[1] Singulis nummis.

cussion is exhausted. For what greater benefit could be secured to us by the comparative nearness of the towns which we inhabit? I have resolved to debate with you in no other way than by letters, in order both to prevent anything that is said from escaping from our memory, and to secure that others interested in the question, but unable to be present at a debate, may not forfeit the instruction. You are accustomed, not with any intention of falsehood, but by mistake, to reproach us with charges such as may suit your purpose, concerning past transactions, which we repudiate as untrue. Therefore, if you please, let us weigh the question in the light of the present, and let the past alone. You are doubtless aware that in the Jewish dispensation the sin of idolatry was committed by the people, and once the book of the prophet of God was burned by a defiant king;[1] the punishment of the sin of schism would not have been more severe than that with which these two were visited, had not the guilt of it been greater. You remember, of course, how the earth opening swallowed up alive the leaders of a schism, and fire from heaven breaking forth destroyed their accomplices.[2] Neither the making and worshipping of an idol, nor the burning of the Holy Book, was deemed worthy of such punishment.

2. You are wont to reproach us with a crime, not proved against us, indeed, though proved beyond question against some of your own party,—the crime, namely, of yielding up, through fear of persecution, the Scriptures[3] to be burned. Let me ask, therefore, why you have received back men whom you condemned for the crime of schism by the "unerring voice of your plenary Council" (I quote from the record), and replaced them in the same episcopal sees as they were in at the time when you passed sentence against them? I refer to Felicianus of Musti and Prætextatus of Assuri.[4] These were not, as you would have the ignorant believe, included among those to whom your Council appointed and intimated a certain

[1] Jer. xxxvi. 23. [2] Num. xvi. 31–35. [3] Dominici libri.

[4] Felicianus and Prætextatus were two of the twelve bishops by whom Maximianus was ordained. They were condemned by the Donatist Council of Bagæ; but finding it impossible to eject them from their sees, the Donatists yielded after a time, and restored them to their office. See Letter LIII. p. 195.

time, after the lapse of which, if they had not returned to your communion, the sentence would become final; but they were included among the others whom you condemned, without delay, on the day on which you gave to some, as I have said, a respite. I can prove this, if you deny it. Your own Council is witness. We have also the proconsular Acts, in which you have not once, but often, affirmed this. Provide, therefore, some other line of defence if you can, lest, denying what I can prove, you cause loss of time. If, then, Felicianus and Prætextatus were innocent, why were they thus condemned? If they were guilty, why were they thus restored? If you prove them to have been innocent, can you object to our believing that it was possible for innocent men, falsely charged with being traditors, to be condemned by a much smaller number of your predecessors, if it is found possible for innocent men, falsely charged with being schismatics, to be condemned by three hundred and ten of their successors, whose decision is magniloquently described as proceeding from "the unerring voice of a plenary Council"? If, however, you prove them to have been justly condemned, what can you plead in defence of their being restored to office in the same episcopal sees, unless, magnifying the importance and benefit of peace, you maintain that even such things as these should be tolerated in order to preserve unbroken the bond of unity? Would to God that you would urge this plea, not with the lips only, but with the whole heart! You could not fail then to perceive that no calumnies whatever could justify the breaking up of the peace of Christ throughout the world, if it is lawful in Africa for men, once condemned for impious schism, to be restored to the same office which they held, rather than break up the peace of Donatus and his party.

3. Again, you are wont to reproach us with persecuting you by the help of the civil power. In regard to this, I do not draw an argument either from the demerit involved in the enormity of so great an impiety, nor from the Christian meekness moderating the severity of our measures. I take up this position: if this be a crime, why have you harshly persecuted the Maximianists by the help of judges appointed by those emperors whose spiritual birth by the gospel was due to

our Church? Why have you driven them, by the din of controversy, the authority of edicts, and the violence of soldiery, from those buildings for worship which they possessed, and in which they were when they seceded from you? The wrongs endured by them in that struggle in every place are attested by the existing traces of events so recent. Documents declare the orders given. The deeds done are notorious throughout regions in which also the sacred memory of your leader Optatus is mentioned with honour.

4. Again, you are wont to say that we have not the baptism of Christ, and that beyond your communion it is not to be found. On this I would enter into a more lengthened argument; but in dealing with you this is not necessary, seeing that, along with Felicianus and Prætextatus, you admitted also the baptism of the Maximianists as valid. For all whom these bishops baptized so long as they were in communion with Maximianus, while you were doing your utmost in a protracted contest in the civil courts to expel these very men [Felicianus and Prætextatus] from their churches, as the Acts testify,—all those, I say, whom they baptized during that time, they now have in fellowship with them and with you; and though these were baptized by them when excommunicated and in the guilt of schism, not only in cases of extremity through dangerous sickness, but also at the Easter services, in the large number of churches belonging to their cities, and in these important cities themselves,—in the case of none of them has the rite of baptism been repeated. And I wish you could prove that those whom Felicianus and Prætextatus had baptized, as it were, in vain, when they were excommunicated and in the guilt of schism, were satisfactorily baptized again by them when they were restored. For if the renewal of baptism was necessary for the people, the renewal of ordination was not less necessary for the bishops. For they had forfeited their episcopal office by leaving you, if they could not baptize beyond your communion; because, if they had not forfeited their episcopal office by leaving you, they could still baptize. But if they had forfeited their episcopal office, they should have received ordination when they returned, so that what they had lost might be restored. Let not this, however, alarm you.

As it is certain that they returned with the same standing as bishops with which they had gone forth from you, so is it also certain that they brought back with themselves to your communion, without any repetition of their baptism, all those whom they had baptized in the schism of Maximianus.

5. How can we weep enough when we see the baptism of the Maximianists acknowledged by you; and the baptism of the Church universal despised? Whether it was with or without hearing their defence, whether it was justly or unjustly, that you condemned Felicianus and Prætextatus, I do not ask; but tell me what bishop of the Corinthian Church ever defended himself at your bar, or received sentence from you? or what bishop of the Galatians has done so, or of the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Thessalonians, or of any of the other cities included in the promise: "All the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee"?[1] Yet you accept the baptism of the former, while that of the latter is despised; whereas baptism belongs neither to the one nor to the other, but to Him of whom it was said: "This same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."[2] I do not, however, dwell on this in the meantime: take notice of the things which are beside us—behold what might make an impression even on the blind! Where do we find the baptism which you acknowledge? With those, forsooth, whom you have condemned, but not with those who were never even tried at your bar!—with those who were denounced by name, and cast forth from you for the crime of schism, but not with those who, unknown to you, and dwelling in remote lands, never were accused or condemned by you!—with those who are but a fraction of the inhabitants of a fragment of Africa, but not with those from whose country the gospel first came to Africa! Why should I add to your burden? Let me have an answer to these things. Look to the charge made by your Council against the Maximianists as guilty of impious schism: look to the persecutions by the civil courts to which you appealed against them: look to the fact that you restored some of them without re-ordination, and accepted their baptism as valid: and answer, if you can, whether it is in your

[1] Ps. xxii. 27. [2] John i. 33.

power to hide, even from the ignorant, the question why you have separated yourselves from the whole world, in a schism much more heinous than that which you boast of having condemned in the Maximianists? May the peace of Christ triumph in your heart! Then all shall be well.[1]

LETTER LII.

This letter to his kinsman Severinus, exhorting him to withdraw from the Donatists, contains no new argument.

LETTER LIII.

(A.D. 400.)

TO GENEROSUS, OUR MOST LOVED AND HONOURABLE BROTHER, FORTUNATUS, ALYPIUS, AND AUGUSTINE SEND GREETING IN THE LORD.

CHAP. I. 1. Since you were pleased to acquaint us with the letter sent to you by a Donatist presbyter, although, with the spirit of a true Catholic, you regarded it with contempt, nevertheless, to aid you in seeking his welfare if his folly be not incurable, we beg you to forward to him the following reply. He wrote that an angel had enjoined him to declare to you the episcopal succession[2] of the Christianity of your town; to you, forsooth, who hold the Christianity not of your own town only, nor of Africa only, but of the whole world, the Christianity which has been published, and is now published to all nations. This proves that they think it a small matter that they themselves are not ashamed of being cut off, and are taking no measures, while they may, to be engrafted anew; they are not content unless they do their utmost to cut others off, and bring them to share their own fate, as withered branches fit for the flames. Wherefore, even if you had yourself been visited by that angel whom he affirms to have appeared to him,—a statement which we regard as a

[1] We conjecture this to be the meaning of the elliptical expression ΕΤΤΥΧΩΣ with which the letter ends.

[2] "Ordo." The phrase is afterwards given (sec. 2) more fully, "ordo episcoporum sibi succedentium."

cunning fiction; and if the angel had said to you the very words which he, on the warrant of the alleged command, repeated to you,—even in that case it would have been your duty to remember the words of the apostle: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."[1] For to you it was proclaimed by the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that His "gospel shall be preached unto all nations, and then shall the end come."[2] To you it has moreover been proclaimed by the writings of the prophets and of the apostles, that the promises were given to Abraham and to his seed, which is Christ,[3] when God said unto him: "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Having then such promises, if an angel from heaven were to say to thee, "Let go the Christianity of the whole earth, and cling to the faction of Donatus, the episcopal succession of which is set forth in a letter of their bishop in your town," he ought to be accursed in your estimation; because he would be endeavouring to cut you off from the whole Church, and thrust you into a small party, and make you forfeit your interest in the promises of God.

2. For if the lineal succession of bishops is to be taken into account, with how much more certainty and benefit to the Church do we reckon back till we reach Peter himself, to whom, as bearing in a figure the whole Church,[4] the Lord said: "Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!"[5] The successor of Peter was Linus, and his successors in unbroken continuity were these:—Clement, Anacletus, Evaristus, Alexander, Sixtus, Telesphorus, Iginus, Anicetus, Pius, Soter, Eleutherius, Victor, Zephirinus, Calixtus, Urbanus, Pontianus, Antherus, Fabianus, Cornelius, Lucius, Stephanus, Xystus, Dionysius, Felix, Eutychianus, Gaius, Marcellinus, Marcellus, Eusebius, Miltiades, Sylvester, Marcus, Julius Liberius, Damasus, and Siricius, whose successor is the present Bishop Anastasius. In this order of succession no Donatist bishop is found. But, reversing the natural course of things, the Donatists sent to

[1] Gal. i. 8. [2] Matt. xxiv. 14. [3] Gal. iii. 16.
[4] Totius Ecclesiæ figuram gerenti. [5] Matt. xvi. 18.

Rome from Africa an ordained bishop, who, putting himself at the head of a few Africans in the great metropolis, gave some notoriety to the name of "mountain men," or Cutzupits, by which they were known.

3. Now, even although some traditor had in the course of these centuries, through inadvertence, obtained a place in that order of bishops, reaching from Peter himself to Anastasius, who now occupies that see,—this fact would do no harm to the Church and to Christians having no share in the guilt of another; for the Lord, providing against such a case, says, concerning officers in the Church who are wicked: "All whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."[1] Thus the stability of the hope of the faithful is secured, inasmuch as being fixed, not in man, but in the Lord, it never can be swept away by the raging of impious schism; whereas they themselves are swept away who read in the Holy Scriptures the names of churches to which the apostles wrote, and in which they have no bishop. For what could more clearly prove their perversity and their folly, than their saying to their clergy, when they read these letters, "Peace be with thee,"[2] at the very time that they are themselves disjoined from the peace of those churches to which the letters were originally written?

CHAP. II. 4. Lest, however, he should congratulate himself too much on the succession of bishops in Constantina, your own city, read to him the records of proceedings before Munatius Felix, the resident Flamen [heathen priest], who was governor of your city in the consulship of Diocletian for the eighth time, and Maximian for the seventh, on the eleventh day before the calends of June. By these records it is proved that the bishop Paulus was a traditor; the fact being that Sylvanus was then one of his sub-deacons, and, along with him, produced and surrendered certain things belonging to the Lord's house, which had been most carefully concealed, namely a box[3] and a lamp of silver, upon seeing which a certain Victor

[1] Matt. xxiii. 3.
[2] Compare the allusion to the same custom in Letter XLIII. sec. 21, p. 155.
[3] Capitulata.

is reported to have said, "You would have been put to death if you had not found these." Your Donatist priest makes great account of this Sylvanus, this clearly convicted traditor, in the letter which he writes you, mentioning him as then ordained to the office of bishop by the Primate Secundus of Tigisis. Let them keep their proud tongues silent, let them admit the charges which may truly be brought against themselves, and not utter foolish calumnies against others. Read to him also, if he permits it, the ecclesiastical records of the proceedings of this same Secundus of Tigisis in the house of Urbanus Donatus, in which he remitted to God, as judge, men who confessed themselves to have been traditors—Donatus of Masculi, Marinus of Aquæ Tibilitanæ, Donatus of Calama, with whom as his colleagues, though they were confessed traditors, he ordained their bishop Sylvanus, of whose guilt in the same matter I have given the history above. Read to him also the proceedings before Zenophilus, a man of consular rank, in the course of which a certain deacon of theirs, Nundinarius, being angry with Sylvanus for having excommunicated him, brought all these facts into court, proving them incontestably by authentic documents, and the questioning of witnesses, and the reading of public records and many letters.

5. There are many other things which you might read in his hearing, if he is disposed not to dispute angrily, but to listen prudently, such as: the petition of the Donatists to Constantine, begging him to send from Gaul bishops who should settle this controversy which divided the African bishops; the Acts recording what took place in Rome, when the case was taken up and decided by the bishops whom he sent thither: also you might read in other letters how the Emperor aforesaid states that they had made a complaint to him against the decision of their peers—the bishops, namely, whom he had sent to Rome; how he appointed other bishops to try the case over [illegible] how they appealed from that tribunal also to [illegible]ain; how at last he himself investigated the [illegible]ow he most emphatically declares that they [illegible]d by the innocence of Cæcilianus. Let him [illegible] things if he be willing, and he will be silent [illegible] plotting against the truth.

CHAP. III. 6. We rely, however, not so much on these documents as on the Holy Scriptures, wherein a dominion extending to the ends of the earth among all nations is promised as the heritage of Christ, separated from which by their sinful schism they reproach us with the crimes which belong to the chaff in the Lord's threshing-floor, which must be permitted to remain mixed with the good grain until the end come, until the whole be winnowed in the final judgment. From which it is manifest that, whether these charges be true or false, they do not belong to the Lord's wheat,[1] which must grow until the end of the world throughout the whole field, *i.e.* the whole earth; as we know, not by the testimony of a false angel such as confirmed your correspondent in his error, but from the words of the Lord in the Gospel. And because these unhappy Donatists have brought the reproach of many false and empty accusations against Christians who were blameless, but who are throughout the world mingled with the chaff or tares, *i.e.* with Christians unworthy of the name, therefore God has, in righteous retribution, appointed that they should, by their universal Council, condemn as schismatics the Maximianists, because they had condemned Primianus, and baptized while not in communion with Primianus, and re-baptized those whom he had baptized, and then after a short interval should, under the coercion of Optatus the minion of Gildo, reinstate in the honours of their office two of these, the bishops Felicianus of Musti and Prætextatus of Assuri, and acknowledge the baptism of all whom they, while under sentence and excommunicated, had baptized. If, therefore, they are not defiled by communion with the men thus restored again to their office,—men whom with their own mouth they had condemned as wicked and impious, and whom they compared to those first heretics whom the earth swallowed up alive,[2]—let them at last awake and consider how great is their blindness and folly in pronouncing the whole world defiled by unknown crimes of Africans, and the heritage of Christ (which according to the promise has been shown unto all nations) destroyed through the sins of these Africans by the maintenance of communion with them; while they refuse to

[1] Matt. xiii. 30. [2] Num. xvi. 31-33.

acknowledge themselves to be destroyed and defiled by communicating with men whose crimes they had both known and condemned.

7. Wherefore, since the Apostle Paul says in another place, that even Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, and that therefore it is not strange that his servants should assume the guise of ministers of righteousness:[1] if your correspondent did indeed see an angel teaching him error, and desiring to separate Christians from the Catholic unity, he has met with an angel of Satan transforming himself into an angel of light. If, however, he has lied to you, and has seen no such vision, he is himself a servant of Satan, assuming the guise of a minister of righteousness. And yet, if he be not incorrigibly obstinate and perverse, he may, by considering all the things now stated, be delivered both from misleading others, and from being himself misled. For, embracing the opportunity which you have given, we have met him without any rancour, remembering in regard to him the words of the apostle: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."[2] If, therefore, we have said anything severe, let him know that it arises not from the bitterness of controversy, but from love vehemently desiring his return to the right path. May you live safe in Christ, most beloved and honourable brother!

LETTER LIV.

Styled also Book I. of Replies to Questions of Januarius.

(A.D. 400.)

TO HIS BELOVED SON JANUARIUS, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

CHAP. 1. 1. In regard to the questions which you have asked me, I would like to have known what your own answers

[1] 2 Cor. xi. 13-15. [2] 2 Tim. ii. 24-26.

would have been; for thus I might have made my reply in fewer words, and might most easily confirm or correct your opinions, by approving or amending the answers which you had given. This I would have greatly preferred. But desiring to answer you at once, I think it better to write a long letter than incur loss of time. I desire you therefore, in the first place, to hold fast this as the fundamental principle in the present discussion, that our Lord Jesus Christ has appointed to us a "light yoke" and an "easy burden," as He declares in the Gospel:[1] in accordance with which He has bound His people under the new dispensation together in fellowship by sacraments, which are in number very few, in observance most easy, and in significance most excellent, as baptism solemnized in the name of the Trinity, the communion of His body and blood, and such other things as are prescribed in the canonical Scriptures, with the exception of those enactments which were a yoke of bondage to God's ancient people, suited to their state of heart and to the times of the prophets, and which are found in the five books of Moses. As to those other things which we hold on the authority, not of Scripture, but of tradition, and which are observed throughout the whole world, it may be understood that they are held as approved and instituted either by the apostles themselves, or by plenary Councils, whose authority in the Church is most useful, *e.g.* the annual commemoration, by special solemnities, of the Lord's passion, resurrection, and ascension, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit from heaven, and whatever else is in like manner observed by the whole Church wherever it has been established.

CHAP. II. 2. There are other things, however, which are different in different places and countries: *e.g.*, some fast on Saturday, others do not; some partake daily of the body and blood of Christ, others receive it on stated days: in some places no day passes without the sacrifice being offered; in others it is only on Saturday and the Lord's day, or it may be only on the Lord's day. In regard to these and all other variable observances which may be met anywhere, one is at liberty to comply with them or not as he chooses; and there

[1] Matt. xi. 30.

is no better rule for the wise and serious Christian in this matter, than to conform to the practice which he finds prevailing in the Church to which it may be his lot to come. For such a custom, if it is clearly not contrary to the faith nor to sound morality, is to be held as a thing indifferent, and ought to be observed for the sake of fellowship with those among whom we live.

3. I think you may have heard me relate before,[1] what I will nevertheless now mention. When my mother followed me to Milan, she found the Church there not fasting on Saturday. She began to be troubled, and to hesitate as to what she should do; upon which I, though not taking a personal interest then in such things, applied on her behalf to Ambrose, of most blessed memory, for his advice. He answered that he could not teach me anything but what he himself practised, because if he knew any better rule, he would observe it himself. When I supposed that he intended, on the ground of his authority alone, and without supporting it by any argument, to recommend us to give up fasting on Saturday, he followed me, and said: "When I visit Rome, I fast on Saturday; when I am here, I do not fast. On the same principle, do you observe the custom prevailing in whatever Church you come to, if you desire neither to give offence by your conduct, nor to find cause of offence in another's." When I reported this to my mother, she accepted it gladly; and for myself, after frequently reconsidering his decision, I have always esteemed it as if I had received it by an oracle from heaven. For often have I perceived, with extreme sorrow, many disquietudes caused to weak brethren by the contentious pertinacity or superstitious vacillation of some who, in matters of this kind, which do not admit of final decision by the authority of Holy Scripture, or by the tradition of the universal Church, or by their manifest good influence on manners, raise questions, it may be from some crotchet of their own, or from attachment to the customs followed in one's own country, or from preference for that which one has seen abroad, supposing that wisdom is increased in proportion to the distance to which men travel from home, and agitate these questions with such

[1] Compare Letter XXXVI. sec. 32, p. 125.

keenness, that they think all is wrong except what they do themselves.

CHAP. III. 4. Some one may say, "The Eucharist ought not to be taken every day." You ask, "On what grounds?" He answers, "Because, in order that a man may approach worthily to so great a sacrament, he ought to choose those days upon which he lives in more special purity and self-restraint; for 'whosoever eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.'"[1] Another answers, "Certainly; if the wound inflicted by sin and the violence of the soul's distemper be such that the use of these remedies must be put off for a time, every man in this case should be, by the authority of the bishop, forbidden to approach the altar, and appointed to do penance,[2] and should be afterwards restored to privileges by the same authority; for this would be partaking unworthily, if one should partake of it at a time when he ought to be doing penance; and it is not a matter to be left to one's own judgment to withdraw himself from the communion of the Church, or restore himself, as he pleases. If, however, his sins are not so great as to bring him justly under sentence of excommunication, he ought not to withdraw himself from the daily use of the Lord's body for the healing of his soul." Perhaps a third party interposes with a more just decision of the question, reminding them that the principal thing is to remain united in the peace of Christ, and that each should be free, to do what, according to his belief, he conscientiously regards as his duty. For neither of them lightly esteems the body and blood of the Lord; on the contrary, both are contending who shall most highly honour the sacrament fraught with blessing. There was no controversy between those two mentioned in the Gospel, Zacchæus and the Centurion; nor did either of them think himself better than the other, though, whereas the former received the Lord joyfully into his house,[3] the latter said, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof,"[4]—both honouring the Saviour, though in ways diverse and, as it were, mutually opposed; both miserable through sin, and both obtaining the mercy they required. We may further borrow an illustration

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 29. [2] Agere pœnitentiam. [3] Luke xix. 6. [4] Matt. viii. 8.

here, from the fact that the manna given to the ancient people of God tasted in each man's mouth as he desired that it might.[1] It is the same with this world-subduing sacrament in the heart of each Christian. For he that dares not take it every day, and he who dares not omit it any day, are both alike moved by a desire to do it honour. That sacred food will not submit to be despised, as the manna could not be loathed with impunity. Hence the apostle says that it was unworthily partaken of by those who did not distinguish between this and all other meats, by yielding to it the special veneration which was due; for to the words quoted already, "eateth and drinketh judgment to himself," he has added these, "not discerning the Lord's body;" and this is apparent from the whole of that passage in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, if it be carefully studied.

CHAP. IV. 5. Suppose some foreigner visit a place in which during Lent it is customary to abstain from the use of the bath, and to continue fasting on Thursday. "I will not fast to-day," he says. The reason being asked, he says, "Such is not the custom in my own country." Is not he, by such conduct, attempting to assert the superiority of his custom over theirs? For he cannot quote a decisive passage on the subject from the Book of God; nor can he prove his opinion to be right by the unanimous voice of the universal Church, wherever spread abroad; nor can he demonstrate that they act contrary to the faith, and he according to it, or that they are doing what is prejudicial to sound morality, and he is defending its interests. Those men injure their own tranquillity and peace by quarrelling on an unnecessary question. I would rather recommend that, in matters of this kind, each man should, when sojourning in a country in which he finds a custom different from his own, consent to do as others do. If, on the other hand, a Christian, when travelling abroad in some region where the people of God are more numerous, and more easily

[1] In his *Retractations*, b. ii. ch. xx., Augustine remarks on this statement: "I do not recollect any passage by which it could be substantiated, except from the Book of Wisdom (ch. xvi. 21), which the Jews do not admit to be of canonical authority." He says, in the same place, that this peculiarity of the manna must have been enjoyed only by the pious in Israel, not by the murmurers who said, "Our soul loathed this light bread" (Num. xxi. 5).

assembled together, and more zealous in religion, has seen, *e.g.*, the sacrifice twice offered, both morning and evening, on the Thursday of the last week in Lent, and therefore, on his coming back to his own country, where it is offered only at the close of the day, protests against this as wrong and unlawful, because he has himself seen another custom in another land, this would show a childish weakness of judgment against which we should guard ourselves, and which we must bear with in others, but correct in all who are under our influence.

CHAP. V. 6. Observe now to which of these three classes the first question in your letter is to be referred. You ask, "What ought to be done on the Thursday of the last week of Lent? Ought we to offer the sacrifice in the morning, and again after supper, on account of the words in the Gospel, 'Likewise also . . . after supper'?[1] Or ought we to fast and offer the sacrifice only after supper? Or ought we to fast until the offering has been made, and then take supper as we are accustomed to do?" I answer, therefore, that if the authority of Scripture has decided which of these methods is right, there is no room for doubting that we should do according to that which is written; and our discussion must be occupied with a question, not of duty, but of interpretation as to the meaning of the divine institution. In like manner, if the universal Church follows any one of these methods, there is no room for doubt as to our duty; for it would be the height of arrogant madness to discuss whether or not we should comply with it. But the question which you propose is not decided either by Scripture or by universal practice. It must therefore be referred to the third class—as pertaining, namely, to things which are different in different places and countries. Let every man, therefore, conform himself to the usage prevailing in the Church to which he may come. For none of these methods is contrary to the Christian faith or the interests of morality, as favoured by the adoption of one custom more than the other. If this were the case, that either the faith or sound morality were at stake, it would be necessary either to change what was done amiss, or to appoint the doing of what had been neglected. But mere change of custom, even

[1] Luke xxii. 20.

though it may be of advantage in some respects, unsettles men by reason of the novelty: therefore, if it brings no advantage, it does much harm by unprofitably disturbing the Church.

7. Let me add, that it would be a mistake to suppose that the custom prevalent in many places, of offering the sacrifice on that day after partaking of food, is to be traced to the words, "Likewise after supper," etc. For the Lord might give the name of supper to what they had received, in already partaking of His body, so that it was after this that they partook of the cup: as the apostle says in another place, "When ye come together into one place, this is not to *eat*[1] the Lord's Supper,"[2] giving to the receiving of the Eucharist to that extent (*i.e.* the eating of the bread) the name of the Lord's Supper.

CHAP. VI. As to the question whether upon that day it is right to partake of food before either offering or partaking of the Eucharist, these words in the Gospel might go far to decide our minds, "As they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it;" taken in connection with the words in the preceding context, "When the even was come, He sat down with the twelve: and as they did eat, He said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me." For it was after that that He instituted the sacrament; and it is clear that when the disciples first received the body and blood of the Lord, they had not been fasting.

8. Must we therefore censure the universal Church because the sacrament is everywhere partaken of by persons fasting? Nay, verily, for from that time it pleased the Holy Spirit to appoint, for the honour of so great a sacrament, that the body of the Lord should take the precedence of all other food entering the mouth of a Christian; and it is for this reason that the custom referred to is universally observed. For the fact that the Lord instituted the sacrament after other food had been partaken of, does not prove that brethren should come together to partake of that sacrament after having dined or supped, or imitate those whom the apostle reproved and corrected for not distinguishing between the Lord's Supper and an ordinary meal. The Saviour, indeed, in order to com-

[1] Manducare.

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 20.

mend the depth of that mystery more affectingly to His disciples, was pleased to impress it on their hearts and memories by making its institution His last act before going from them to His Passion. And therefore He did not prescribe the order in which it was to be observed, reserving this to be done by the apostles, through whom He intended to arrange all things pertaining to the Churches. Had He appointed that the sacrament should be always partaken of after other food, I believe that no one would have departed from that practice. But when the apostle, speaking of this sacrament, says, "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another: and if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation," he immediately adds, "and the rest will I set in order when I come."[1] Whence we are given to understand that, since it was too much for him to prescribe completely in an epistle the method observed by the universal Church throughout the world, it was one of the things set in order by him in person, for we find its observance uniform amid all the variety of other customs.

CHAP. VII. 9. There are, indeed, some to whom it has seemed right (and their view is not unreasonable), that it is lawful for the body and blood of the Lord to be offered and received after other food has been partaken of, on one fixed day of the year, the day on which the Lord instituted the Supper, in order to give special solemnity to the service on that anniversary. I think that, in this case, it would be more seemly to have it celebrated at such an hour as would leave it in the power of any who have fasted to attend the service before[2] the repast which is customary at the ninth hour. Wherefore we neither compel nor do we dare to forbid any one to break his fast before the Lord's Supper on that day. I believe, however, that the real ground upon which this custom rests is, that many, nay, almost all, are accustomed in most places to use the bath on that day. And because some continue to fast, it is offered in the morning, for those who

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 33, 34.

[2] "Ante" is the reading of seven MSS. The Benedictine edition gives "post" in the text. We think the former gives better sense.

take food, because they cannot bear fasting and the use of the bath at the same time; and in the evening, for those who have fasted all day.

10. If you ask me whence originated the custom of using the bath on that day, nothing occurs to me, when I think of it, as more likely than that it was to avoid the offence to decency which must have been given at the baptismal font, if the bodies of those to whom that rite was to be administered were not washed on some preceding day from the uncleanness consequent upon their strict abstinence from ablutions during Lent; and that this particular day was chosen for the purpose because of its being the anniversary of the institution of the Supper. And this being granted to those who were about to receive baptism, many others desired to join them in the luxury of a bath, and in relaxation of their fast.

Having discussed these questions to the best of my ability, I exhort you to observe, in so far as you may be able, what I have laid down, as becomes a wise and peace-loving son of the Church. The remainder of your questions I purpose, if the Lord will, to answer at another time.

LETTER LV.

Or Book II. of Replies to Questions of Januarius.

(A.D. 400.)

CHAP. I. 1. Having read the letter in which you have put me in mind of my obligation to give answers to the remainder of those questions which you submitted to me a long time ago, I cannot bear to defer any longer the gratification of that desire for instruction which it gives me so much pleasure and comfort to see in you; and although encompassed by an accumulation of engagements, I have given the first place to the work of supplying you with the answers desired. I will make no further comment on the contents of your letter, lest my doing so should prevent me from paying at length what I owe.

2. You ask, "Wherefore does the anniversary on which

we celebrate the Passion of the Lord not fall, like the day which tradition has handed down as the day of His birth, on the same day every year?" and you add, "If the reason of this is connected with the week and the month, what have we to do with the day of the week or the state of the moon in this solemnity?" The first thing which you must know and remember here is, that the observance of the Lord's natal day is not sacramental, but only commemorative of His birth, and that therefore no more was in this case necessary, than that the return of the day on which the event took place should be marked by an annual religious festival. The celebration of an event becomes sacramental in its nature, only when the commemoration of the event is so ordered that it is understood to be significant of something which is to be received with reverence as sacred.[1] Therefore we observe Easter[2] in such a manner as not only to recall the facts of the death and resurrection of Christ to remembrance, but also to find a place for all the other things which, in connection with these events, give evidence as to the import of the sacrament. For since, as the apostle wrote, "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification,"[3] a certain transition from death to life has been consecrated in that Passion and Resurrection of the Lord. For the word Pascha itself is not, as is commonly thought, a Greek word: those who are acquainted with both languages affirm it to be a Hebrew word. It is not derived, therefore, from the Passion, because of the Greek word πάσχειν, signifying to suffer, but it takes its name from the transition, of which I have spoken, from death to life; the meaning of the Hebrew word Pascha being, as those who are acquainted with it assure us,[4] a passing over or transition. To this the Lord Himself designed to allude, when He said, "He that believeth in Me is passed from death to life."[5] And the same evangelist who records that saying is to be

[1] Sancte accipiendum. [2] Pascha. [3] Rom. iv. 25.

[4] Had Augustine not been obliged to take his Hebrew at second hand, he might have seen that the word פֶּסַח does not bear out his interpretation. Ex. xii. 13, 27.

[5] John v. 24.

understood as desiring to give emphatic testimony to this, when, speaking of the Lord as about to celebrate with His disciples the passover, at which He instituted the sacramental supper, he says, "When Jesus knew that His hour was come, that He should depart[1] from this world unto the Father."[2] This passing over from this mortal life to the other, the immortal life, that is, from death to life, is set forth in the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord.

CHAP. II. 3. This passing from death to life is meanwhile wrought in us by faith, which we have for the pardon of our sins and the hope of eternal life, when we love God and our neighbour; "for faith worketh by love,"[3] and "the just shall live by his faith;"[4] "and hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."[5] According to this faith and hope and love, by which we have begun to be "under grace," we are already dead together with Christ, and buried together with Him by baptism into death;[6] as the apostle hath said, "Our old man is crucified with Him;"[7] and we have risen with Him, for "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit with Him in heavenly places."[8] Whence also he gives this exhortation: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."[9] In the next words, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory,"[10] he plainly gives us to understand that our passing in this present time from death to life by faith is accomplished in the hope of that future final resurrection and glory, when "this corruptible," that is, this flesh in which we now groan, "shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality."[11] For now, indeed, we have by faith "the first-fruits of the Spirit;" but still we "groan within ourselves, waiting

[1] Transiret.
[2] John xiii. 1.
[3] Gal. v. 6.
[4] Hab. ii. 4.
[5] Rom. viii. 24, 25.
[6] Col. ii. 12 and Rom. vi. 4,
[7] Rom. vi. 6.
[8] Eph. ii. 6.
[9] Col. iii. 1, 2.
[10] Col. iii. 3, 4.
[11] 1 Cor. xv. 53.

for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body: for we are saved by hope." While we are in this hope, "the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." Now mark what follows: "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."[1] The whole Church, therefore, while here in the conditions of pilgrimage and mortality, expects that to be accomplished in her at the end of the world which has been shown first in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the first-begotten from the dead," seeing that the body of which He is the Head is none other than the Church.[2]

CHAP. III. 4. Some, indeed, studying the words so frequently used by the apostle, about our being dead with Christ and raised together with Him, and misunderstanding the sense in which they are used, have thought that the resurrection is already past, and that no other is to be hoped for at the end of time: "Of whom," he says, "are Hymenæus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."[3] The same apostle who thus reproves and testifies against them, teaches nevertheless that we are risen with Christ. How is the apparent contradiction to be removed, unless he means that this is accomplished in us by faith and hope and love, according to the first-fruits of the Spirit? But because "hope which is seen is not hope," and therefore "if we hope for that we see not, we do with patience wait for it," it is beyond question that there remains, as still future, the redemption of the body, in longing for which we "groan within ourselves." Hence also that saying, "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation."[4]

5. This renewal, therefore, of our life is a kind of transition from death to life which is made first by faith, so that we rejoice in hope and are patient in tribulation, while still "our outward man perisheth, but the inward man is renewed day by day."[5] It is because of this beginning of a new life,

[1] Rom. viii. 23, 24, 10, 11. [2] Col. i. 18. [3] 2 Tim. ii. 17.
[4] Rom. xii. 12. [5] 2 Cor. iv. 16.

because of the new man which we are commanded to put on, putting off the old man,[1] "purging out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump, because Christ our passover is sacrificed for us;"[2] it is, I say, because of this newness of life in us, that the first of the months of the year has been appointed as the season of this solemnity. This very name is given to it, the month Abib, or beginning of months.[3] Again, the resurrection of the Lord was upon the third day, because with it the third epoch of the world began. The first Epoch was before the Law, the second under the Law, the third under Grace, in which there is now the manifestation of the mystery,[4] which was formerly hidden under dark prophetic sayings. This is accordingly signified also in the part of the month appointed for the celebration; for, since the number seven is usually employed in Scripture as a mystical number, indicating perfection of some kind, the day of the celebration of Easter is within the third week of the month, namely, between the fourteenth and the twenty-first day.

CHAP. IV. 6. There is in this another mystery,[4] and you are not to be distressed if perhaps it be not so readily perceived by you, because of your being less versed in such studies; nor are you to think me any better than you, because I learned these things in early years: for the Lord saith, "Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord."[5] Some men who give attention to such studies, have investigated many things concerning the numbers and motions of the heavenly bodies. And those who have done this most ably have found that the waxing and waning of the moon are due to the turning of its globe, and not to any such actual addition to or diminution of its substance as is supposed by the foolish Manichæans, who say that as a ship is filled, so the moon is filled with a fugitive portion of the Divine Being, which they, with impious heart and lips, do not hesitate to believe and to declare to have become mingled with the rulers of darkness, and contaminated with their pollution. And they account for the waxing of the moon by saying that it takes place when that lost portion

[1] Col. iii. 9, 10. [2] 1 Cor. v. 7. [3] Ex. xxiii. 15.
[4] Sacramentum. [5] Jer. ix. 24.

of the Deity, being purified from contamination by great labours, escaping from the whole world,[1] and from all foul abominations,[2] is restored to the Deity, who mourns till it returns; that by this the moon is filled up till the middle of the month, and that in the latter half of the month this is poured back into the sun as into another ship. Amid these execrable blasphemies, they have never succeeded in devising any way of explaining why the moon in the beginning or end of its brightness shines with its light in the shape of a horn, or why it begins at the middle of the month to wane, and does not go on full until it pour back its increase into the sun.

7. Those, however, to whom I refer have inquired into these things with trustworthy calculations, so that they can not only state the reason of eclipses, both solar and lunar, but also predict their occurrence long before they take place, and are able to determine by mathematical computation the precise intervals at which these must happen, and to state the results in treatises, by reading and understanding which any others may foretell as well as they the coming of these eclipses, and find their prediction verified by the event. Such men,—and they deserve censure, as Holy Scripture teaches, because "though they had wisdom enough to measure the periods of this world, they did not much more easily come," as by humble piety they might have done, "to the knowledge of its Lord,"[3]—such men, I say, have inferred from the horns of the moon, which both in waxing and in waning are turned from the sun, either that the moon is illuminated by the sun, and that the farther it recedes from the sun the more fully does it lie exposed to its rays on the side which is visible from the earth; but that the more it approaches the sun, after the middle of the month, on the other half of its orbit, it becomes more fully illuminated on the upper part, and less and less open to receive the sun's rays on the side which is turned to the earth, and seems to us accordingly to decrease: or, that if the moon has light in itself, it has this light in the hemisphere on one side only, which side it gradually turns more to the earth as it recedes from the sun, until

[1] Mundus. [2] Cloacis. [3] Wisd. xiii. 9.

it is fully displayed, thereby exhibiting an apparent increase, not by the addition of what was deficient, but by disclosing what was already there; and that, in like manner, going towards the sun, the moon again gradually turns from our view that which had been disclosed, and so appears to decrease. Whichever of these two theories be correct, this at least is plain, and is easily discovered by any careful observer, that the moon does not to our eyes increase except when it is receding from the sun, nor decrease except when returning towards the sun.

CHAP. V. 8. Now mark what is said in Proverbs: "The wise man is fixed like the sun; but the fool changes like the moon."[1] And who is the wise that has no changes, but that Sun of Righteousness of whom it is said, "The sun of righteousness has risen upon me," and of which the wicked shall say, when mourning in the day of judgment that it has not risen upon them, "The light of righteousness hath not shone upon us, and the sun hath not risen upon us"?[2] For that sun which is visible to the eye of sense, God makes to rise upon the evil and the good alike, as He sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust;[3] but apt similitudes are often borrowed from things visible to explain things invisible. Again, who is the "fool" who "changes like the moon," if not Adam, in whom all have sinned? For the soul of man, receding from the Sun of Righteousness, that is to say, from the internal contemplation of unchangeable truth, turns all its strength towards external things, and becomes more and more darkened in its deeper and nobler powers; but when the soul begins to return to that unchangeable wisdom, the more it draws near to it with pious desire, the more does the outward man perish, but the inward man is renewed day by day, and all that light of the soul which was inclining to things that are beneath is turned to the things that are above, and is thus withdrawn from the things of earth; so that it dies more and more to this world, and its life is hid with Christ in God.

9. It is therefore for the worse that the soul is changed when it moves in the direction of external things, and throws aside that which pertains to the inner life; and to the earth,

[1] Ecclus. xxvii. 12. [2] Wisd. v. 6. [3] Matt. v. 45.

i.e. to those who mind earthly things, the soul looks better in such a case, for by them the wicked is commended for his heart's desire, and the unrighteous is blessed.[1] But it is for the better that the soul is changed, when it gradually turns away its aims and ambition from earthly things, which appear important in this world, and directs them to things nobler and unseen; and to the earth, *i.e.* to men who mind earthly things, the soul in such a case seems worse. Hence those wicked men who at last shall in vain repent of their sins, will say this among other things: "These are the men whom once we derided and reproached; we in our folly esteemed their way of life to be madness."[2] Now the Holy Spirit, drawing a comparison from things visible to things invisible, from things corporeal to spiritual mysteries, has been pleased to appoint that the feast symbolical of the passing from the old life to the new, which is signified by the name Pascha, should be observed between the 14th and 21st days of the month,—after the 14th, in order that a twofold illustration of spiritual realities might be gained, both with respect to the third epoch of the world, which is the reason of its occurrence in the third week, as I have already said, and with respect to the turning of the soul from external to internal things,—a change corresponding to the change in the moon when on the wane; not later than the 21st, because of the number 7 itself, which is often used to represent the notion of the universe, and is also applied to the Church on the ground of her likeness to the universe.

CHAP. VI. 10. For this reason the Apostle John writes in the Apocalypse to *seven* churches. The Church, moreover, while it remains under the conditions of our mortal life in the flesh, is, on account of her liability to change, spoken of in Scripture by the name of the moon; *e.g.*, "They have made ready their arrows in the quiver, that they may, while the moon is obscured, wound those who are upright in heart."[3] For before that comes to pass of which the apostle says, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear

[1] Ps. x. 3, as rendered by Aug.

[2] Wisd. v. 3, 4.

[3] Ps. xi. 3; in the LXX. version, *τοῦ κατασκιάσαι ἐν ἀκοτομήνῃ τοὺς εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ.*

with Him in glory,"[1] the Church seems in the time of her pilgrimage obscured, groaning under many iniquities; and at such a time, the snares of those who deceive and lead astray are to be feared, and these are intended by the word "arrows" in this passage. Again, we have another instance in Psalm lxxxix.,[2] where, because of the faithful witnesses which she everywhere brings forth on the side of truth, the Church is called "the moon, a faithful witness in heaven." And when the Psalmist sang of the Lord's kingdom, he said, "In His days shall be righteousness and abundance of peace, until the moon be destroyed;"[3] *i.e.* abundance of peace shall increase so greatly, until He shall at length take away all the changeableness incidental to this mortal condition. Then shall death, the last enemy, be destroyed; and whatever obstacle to the perfection of our peace is due to the infirmity of our flesh shall be utterly consumed when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality.[4] We have another instance in this, that the walls of the town named Jericho—which in the Hebrew tongue is said to signify "moon"—fell when they had been compassed for the seventh time by the ark of the covenant borne round the city. For what else is conveyed by the promise of the coming of the heavenly kingdom, which was symbolized in the carrying of the ark round Jericho, than that all the strongholds of this mortal life, *i.e.* every hope pertaining to this world which resists the hope of the world to come, must be destroyed, with the soul's free consent, by the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore it was, that when the ark was going round, those walls fell, not by violent assault, but of themselves. There are, besides these, other passages in Scripture which, speaking of the moon, impress upon us under that figure the condition of the Church while here, amid cares and labours, she is a pilgrim under the lot of mortality, and far from that Jerusalem of which the holy angels are the citizens.

11. Those foolish men who refuse to be changed for the better have no reason, however, to imagine that worship is

[1] Col. iii. 4.
[2] Ver. 39.
[3] Ps. lxxii. 7, Septuagint version.
[4] 1 Cor. xv, 26, 53, 54.

due to those heavenly luminaries because a similitude is occasionally borrowed from them for the representation of divine mysteries; for such are borrowed from every created thing. Nor is there any reason for our incurring the sentence of condemnation which is pronounced by the apostle on some who worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.[1] We do not adore sheep or cattle, although Christ is called both a Lamb,[2] and by the prophet a young bullock;[3] nor any beast of prey, though He is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah;[4] nor a stone, although Christ is called a Rock;[5] nor Mount Zion, though in it there was a type of the Church.[6] And, in like manner, we do not adore the sun or the moon, although, in order to convey instruction in holy mysteries, figures of sacred things are borrowed from these celestial works of the Creator, as they are also from many of the things which He hath made on earth.

CHAP. VII. 12. We are therefore bound to denounce with abhorrence and contempt the ravings of the astrologers, who, when we find fault with the empty inventions by which they cast other men down into the delusions whereinto they themselves have fallen, imagine that they answer well when they say, "Why, then, do you regulate the time of the observance of Easter by calculation of the positions of the sun and moon?"—as if that with which we find fault was the arrangements of the heavenly bodies, or the succession of the seasons, which are appointed by God in His infinite power and goodness, and not their perversity in abusing, for the support of the most absurd opinions, those things which God has ordered in perfect wisdom. If the astrologer may on this ground forbid us from drawing comparisons from the heavenly bodies for the mystical representation of sacramental realities, then the augurs may with equal reason prevent the use of these words of Scripture, "Be harmless as doves;" and the snake-charmers may forbid that other exhortation, "Be wise as serpents;"[7] while the play-actors may interfere with our mentioning the harp in the book of Psalms. Let them therefore say, if they please, that, because similitudes for the exhibition of the mysteries of God's word

[1] Rom. i. 25. [2] John i. 29. [3] Ezek. xliii. 19. [4] Rev. v. 5.
[5] 1 Cor. x. 4. [6] 1 Pet. ii. 4. [7] Matt. x. 16.

are taken from the things which I have named, we are chargeable either with consulting the omens given by the flight of birds, or with concocting the poisons of the charmer, or with taking pleasure in the excesses of the theatre,—a statement which would be the climax of absurdity.

13. We do not forecast the issues of our enterprises by studying the sun and moon, and the times of the year or of the month, lest in the most trying emergencies of life, we, being dashed against the rocks of a wretched bondage, shall make shipwreck of our freedom of will; but with the most pious devoutness of spirit, we accept similitudes adapted to the illustration of holy things, which these heavenly bodies furnish, just as from all other works of creation, the winds, the sea, the land, birds, fishes, cattle, trees, men, etc., we borrow in our discourses manifold figures; and in the celebration of sacraments, the very few things which the comparative liberty of the Christian dispensation has prescribed, such as water, bread, wine, and oil. Under the bondage, however, of the ancient dispensation many rites were prescribed, which are made known to us only for our instruction as to their meaning. We do not now observe years, and months, and seasons, lest the words of the apostle apply to us, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."[1] For he blames those who say, "I will not set out to-day, because it is an unlucky day, or because the moon is so and so;" or, "I will go to-day, that things may prosper with me, because the position of the stars is this or that; I will do no business this month, because a particular star rules it;" or, "I will do business, because another star has succeeded in its place; I will not plant a vineyard this year, because it is leap year." No man of ordinary sense would, however, suppose that those men deserve reproof for studying the seasons, who say, *e.g.*, "I will not set out to-day, because a storm has begun;" or, "I will not put to sea, because the winter is not yet past;" or, "It is time to sow my seed, for the earth has been saturated with the showers of autumn;" and so on, in regard to any other natural effects of the motion and moisture of the atmosphere which have been observed in connection with that consum-

[1] Gal. iv. 11.

mately ordered revolution of the heavenly bodies concerning which it was said when they were made, "Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years."[1] And in like manner, whensoever illustrative symbols are borrowed, for the declaration of spiritual mysteries, from created things, not only from the heaven and its orbs, but also from meaner creatures, this is done to give to the doctrine of salvation an eloquence adapted to raise the affections of those who receive it from things seen, corporeal and temporal, to things unseen, spiritual and eternal.

CHAP. VIII. 14. None of us gives any consideration to the circumstance that, at the time at which we observe Easter, the sun is in the Ram, as they call a certain region of the heavenly bodies, in which the sun is, in fact, found at the beginning of the months; but whether they choose to call that part of the heavens the Ram or anything else, we have learned this from the Sacred Scriptures, that God made all the heavenly bodies, and appointed their places as it pleased Him; and whatever the parts may be into which astronomers divide the regions set apart and ordained for the different constellations, and whatever the names by which they distinguish them, the place occupied by the sun in the first month is that in which the celebration of this sacrament behoved to find that luminary, because of the illustration of a holy mystery in the renovation of life, of which I have already spoken sufficiently. If, however, the name of Ram could be given to that portion of the heavenly bodies because of some correspondence between their form and the name, the word of God would not hesitate to borrow from anything of this kind an illustration of a holy mystery, as it has done not only from other celestial bodies, but also from terrestrial things, *e.g.* from Orion and the Pleiades, Mount Zion, Mount Sinai, and the rivers of which the names are given, Gihon, Pison, Tigris, Euphrates, and particularly from the river Jordan, which is so often named in the sacred mysteries.

15. But who can fail to perceive how great is the difference between useful observations of the heavenly bodies in connection with the weather, such as farmers or sailors make;

[1] Gen. i. 14.

or in order to mark the part of the world in which they are, and the course which they should follow, such as are made by pilots of ships or men going through the trackless sandy deserts of southern Africa; or in order to present some useful doctrine under a figure borrowed from some facts concerning heavenly bodies;—and the vain hallucinations of men who observe the heavens not to know the weather, or their course, or to make scientific calculations, or to find illustrations of spiritual things, but merely to pry into the future and learn now what fate has decreed?

CHAP. IX. 16. Let us now direct our minds to observe the reason why, in the celebration of Easter, care is taken to appoint the day so that Saturday precedes it: for this is peculiar to the Christian religion. The Jews keep the Passover from the 14th to the 21st of the first month, on whatever day that week begins. But since at the Passover at which the Lord suffered, it was the case that the Jewish Sabbath came in between His death and His resurrection, our fathers have judged it right to add this specialty to their celebration of Easter, both that our feast might be distinguished from the Jewish Passover, and that succeeding generations might retain in their annual commemoration of His Passion that which we must believe to have been done for some good reason, by Him who is before the times, by whom also the times have been made, and who came in the fulness of the times, and who, when He said, Mine hour is not yet come, had the power of laying down His life and taking it again, and was therefore waiting for an hour not fixed by blind fate, but suitable to the holy mystery which He had resolved to commend to our observation.

17. That which we here hold in faith and hope, and to which by love we labour to come, is, as I have said above, a certain holy and perpetual rest from the whole burden of every kind of care; and from this life unto that rest we make a transition which our Lord Jesus Christ condescended to exemplify and consecrate in His Passion. This rest, however, is not a slothful inaction, but a certain ineffable tranquillity caused by work in which there is no painful effort. For the repose on which one enters at the end of the toils of this life

is of such a nature as consists with lively joy in the active exercises of the better life. Forasmuch, however, as this activity is exercised in praising God without bodily toil or mental anxiety, the transition to that activity is not made through a repose which is to be followed by labour, *i.e.* a repose which, at the point where activity begins, ceases to be repose: for in these exercises there is no return to toil and care; but that which constitutes rest—namely, exemption from weariness in work and from uncertainty in thought—is always found in them. Now, since through rest we get back to that original life which the soul lost by sin, the emblem of this rest is the seventh day of the week. But that original life itself which is restored to those who return from their wanderings, and receive in token of welcome the robe which they had at first,[1] is represented by the first day of the week, which we call the Lord's day. If, in reading Genesis, you search the record of the seven days, you will find that there was no evening of the seventh day, which signified that the rest of which it was a type was eternal. The life originally bestowed was not eternal, because man sinned; but the final rest, of which the seventh day was an emblem, is eternal, and hence the eighth day also will have eternal blessedness, because that rest, being eternal, is taken up by the eighth day, not destroyed by it; for if it were thus destroyed, it would not be eternal. Accordingly the eighth day, which is the first day of the week, represents to us that original life, not taken away, but made eternal.

CHAP. X. 18. Nevertheless the seventh day was appointed to the Jewish nation as a day to be observed by rest of the body, that it might be a type of sanctification to which men attain through rest in the Holy Spirit. We do not read of sanctification in the history given in Genesis of all the earlier days: of the Sabbath alone it is said that "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it."[2] Now the souls of men, whether good or bad, love rest, but how to attain to that which they love is to the greater part unknown; and that which bodies seek for their weight, is precisely what souls seek for their love, namely, a resting-place. For as, according

[1] Primam stolam.

[2] Gen. ii. 3.

to its specific gravity, a body descends or rises until it reaches a place where it can rest,—oil, for example, falling if poured into the air, but rising if poured into water,—so the soul of man struggles towards the things which it loves, in order that, by reaching them, it may rest. There are indeed many things which please the soul through the body, but its rest in these is not eternal, nor even long continued; and therefore they rather debase the soul and weigh it down, so as to be a drag upon that pure imponderability by which it tends towards higher things. When the soul finds pleasure from itself, it is not yet seeking delight in that which is unchangeable; and therefore it is still proud, because it is giving to itself the highest place, whereas God is higher. In such sin the soul is not left unpunished, for "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."[1] When, however, the soul delights in God, there it finds the true, sure, and eternal rest, which in all other objects was sought in vain. Therefore the admonition is given in the book of Psalms, "Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."[2]

19. Because, therefore, "the love of God[3] is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us,"[4] sanctification was associated with the seventh day, the day in which rest was enjoined. But inasmuch as we neither are able to do any good work, except as helped by the gift of God, as the apostle says, "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure,"[5] nor will be able to rest, after all the good works which engage us in this life, except as sanctified and perfected by the same gift to eternity; for this reason it is said of God Himself, that when He had made all things "very good," He rested "on the seventh day from all His works which He had made."[6] For He, in so doing, presented a type of that future rest which He proposed to bestow on us men after our good works are done. For as in our good works He is said to work in us, because we

[1] Jas. iv. 6. [2] Ps. xxxvii. 4.

[3] Augustine interprets the "love of God" here as meaning our love to Him, and equivalent to delighting in Him.

[4] Rom. v. 5. [5] Phil. ii. 13. [6] Gen. i. 31, ii. 2.

are enabled to work what is good, so in our rest He is said to rest by whose gift we rest.

CHAP. XI. 20. This, moreover, is the reason why the law of the Sabbath is placed third among the three commandments of the Decalogue which declare our duty to God (for the other seven relate to our neighbour, that is, to man; the whole law hanging on these two commandments).[1] The first commandment, in which we are forbidden to worship any likeness of God made by human contrivance, we are to understand as referring to the Father: this prohibition being made, not because God has no image, but because no image of Him but that One which is the same with Himself, ought to be worshipped; and this One not in His stead, but along with Him. Then, because a creature is mutable, and therefore it is said, "The whole creation is subject to vanity,"[2] since the nature of the whole is manifested also in any part of it, lest any one should think that the Son of God, the Word by whom all things were made, is a creature, the second commandment is, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."[3] And because God sanctified the seventh day, on which He rested, the Holy Spirit—in whom is given to us that rest which we love everywhere, but find only in loving God, when "His love is shed abroad in us, by the Holy Ghost given unto us"[4]—is presented to our minds in the third commandment, which was written concerning the observance of the Sabbath, not to make us suppose that we attain to rest in this present life, but that all our labours in what is good may point towards nothing else than that eternal rest. For I would specially charge you to remember the passage quoted above: "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope."[5]

21. For the feeding and fanning of that ardent love by which, under a law like that of gravitation, we are borne upwards or inwards to rest, the presentation of truth by emblems has a great power: for, thus presented, things move and kindle our affection much more than if they were set forth in bald statements, not clothed with sacramental symbols. Why this should be, it is hard to say; but it is the

[1] Matt. xxii. 10. [2] Rom. viii. 20. [3] Ex. xx. 7; Deut. v. 11.
[4] Rom. v. 5. [5] Rom. viii. 24.

fact that anything which we are taught by allegory or emblem affects and pleases us more, and is more highly esteemed by us, than it would be if most clearly stated in plain terms. I believe that the emotions are less easily kindled while the soul is wholly involved in earthly things; but if it be brought to those corporeal things which are emblems of spiritual things, and then taken from these to the spiritual realities which they represent, it gathers strength by the mere act of passing from the one to the other, and, like the flame of a lighted torch, is made by the motion to burn more brightly, and is carried away to rest by a more intensely glowing love.

CHAP. XII. 22. It is also for this reason, that of all the ten commandments, that which related to the Sabbath was the only one in which the thing commanded was typical;[1] the bodily rest enjoined being a type which we have received as a means of our instruction, but not as a duty binding also upon us. For while in the Sabbath a figure is presented of the spiritual rest, of which it is said in the Psalm, "Be still, and know that I am God,"[2] and unto which men are invited by the Lord Himself in the words, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: so shall ye find rest unto your souls;"[3] as to all the things enjoined in the other commandments, we are to yield to them an obedience in which there is nothing typical. For we have been taught literally not to worship idols; and the precepts enjoining us not to take God's name in vain, to honour our father and mother, not to commit adultery, or kill, or steal, or bear false witness, or covet our neighbour's wife, or covet anything that is our neighbour's,[4] are all devoid of typical or mystical meaning, and are to be literally observed. But we are not commanded to observe the day of the Sabbath literally, in resting from bodily labour, as it is observed by the Jews; and even their observance of the rest as prescribed is to be deemed worthy of contempt, except as signifying another, namely, spiritual rest. From this we may reasonably conclude, that all those

1 Figurate observandum præcipitur.
2 Ps. xlvi. 11.
3 Matt. xi. 28, 29.
4 Ex. xx. 1-17; Deut. v. 6-21.

things which are figuratively set forth in Scripture, are powerful in stimulating that love by which we tend towards rest; since the only figurative or typical precept in the Decalogue is the one in which that rest is commended to us, which is desired everywhere, but is found sure and sacred in God alone.

CHAP. XIII. 23. The Lord's day, however, has been made known not to the Jews, but to Christians, by the resurrection of the Lord, and from Him it began to have the festive character which is proper to it.[1] For the souls of the pious dead are, indeed, in a state of repose before the resurrection of the body, but they are not engaged in the same active exercises as shall engage the strength of their bodies when restored. Now, of this condition of active exercise the eighth day (which is also the first of the week) is a type, because it does not put an end to that repose, but glorifies it. For with the reunion of the body no hindrance of the soul's rest returns, because in the restored body there is no corruption: for "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."[2] Wherefore, although the sacramental import of the 8th number, as signifying the resurrection, was by no means concealed from the holy men of old who were filled with the spirit of prophecy (for in the title of Psalms [vi. and xii.] we find the words "for the eighth," and infants were circumcised on the eighth day; and in Ecclesiastes it is said, with allusion to the two covenants, "Give a portion to seven, and also to eight"[3]); nevertheless, before the resurrection of the Lord, it was reserved and hidden, and the Sabbath alone was appointed to be observed, because before that event there was indeed the repose of the dead (of which the Sabbath rest was a type), but there was not any instance of the resurrection of one who, rising from the dead, was no more to die, and over whom death should no longer have dominion; this being done in order that, from the time when such a resurrection did take place in the Lord's own body (the Head of the Church being the first to experience that which His body, the Church, expects at the end of time), the day upon which He rose, the

[1] Ex illo habere cœpit festivitatem suam. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 53.
[3] Eccles. xi. 2, which Aug. translates, "Da illis septem, et illis octo."

eighth day namely (which is the same with the first of the week), should begin to be observed as the Lord's day. The same reason enables us to understand why, in regard to the day of keeping the passover, on which the Jews were commanded to kill and eat a lamb, which was most clearly a foreshadowing of the Lord's Passion, there was no injunction given to them that they should take the day of the week into account, waiting until the Sabbath was past, and making the beginning of the third week of the moon coincide with the beginning of the third week of the first month; the reason being, that the Lord might rather in His own Passion declare the significance of that day, as He had come also to declare the mystery of the day now known as the Lord's day, the eighth namely, which is also the first of the week.

CHAP. XIV. 24. Consider now with attention these three most sacred days, the days signalized by the Lord's crucifixion, rest in the grave, and resurrection. Of these three, that of which the cross is the symbol is the business of our present life: those things which are symbolized by His rest in the grave and His resurrection we hold by faith and hope. For *now* the command is given to each man, "Take up thy cross, and follow me."[1] But the flesh is crucified, when our members which are upon the earth are mortified, such as fornication, uncleanness, luxury, avarice, etc., of which the apostle says in another passage: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."[2] Hence also he says of himself: "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."[3] And again: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."[4] The period during which our labours tend to the weakening and destruction of the body of sin, during which the outward man is perishing, that the inward man may be renewed day by day,—that is the period of the cross.

25. These are, it is true, good works, having rest for their recompense, but they are meanwhile laborious and painful: therefore we are told to be "rejoicing in hope," that while we

[1] Matt. xvi. 24. [2] Rom. viii. 13. [3] Gal. vi. 14. [4] Rom. vi. 6.

contemplate the future rest, we may labour with cheerfulness in present toil. Of this cheerfulness the breadth of the cross in the transverse beam to which the hands were nailed is an emblem: for the hands we understand to be symbolical of working, and the breadth to be symbolical of cheerfulness in him who works, for sadness straitens the spirit. In the height of the cross, against which the head is placed, we have an emblem of the expectation of recompense from the sublime justice of God, "who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life."[1] Therefore the length of the cross, along which the whole body is extended, is an emblem of that patient continuance in the will of God, on account of which those who are patient are said to be long-suffering. The depth also, *i.e.* the part which is fixed in the ground, represents the occult nature of the holy mystery. For you remember, I suppose, the words of the apostle, which in this description of the cross I aim at expounding: "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height."[2]

Those things which we do not yet see or possess, but hold in faith and hope, are the things represented in the events by which the second and third of the three memorable days above mentioned were signalized [viz. the Lord's rest in the grave, and His resurrection]. But the things which keep us occupied in this present life, while we are held fast in the fear of God by the commandments, as by nails driven through the flesh (as it is written, "Make my flesh fast with nails by fear of Thee"[3]), are to be reckoned among things necessary, not among those which are for their own sakes to be desired and coveted. Hence Paul says that he desired, as something far better, to depart and to be with Christ: "nevertheless," he adds, "to remain in the flesh is expedient for you"[4]—necessary for your welfare. This departing and being with Christ is the beginning of the rest which is not interrupted, but glo-

[1] Rom. ii. 6, 7.
[2] Eph. iii. 17, 18.
[3] Ps. cxix. 120; Septuagint version, καθήλωσον ἐκ τοῦ φόβου σου τὰς σάρκας μου.
[4] Phil. i. 23, 24.

rified by the resurrection; and this rest is now enjoyed by faith, "for the just shall live by faith."[1] "Know ye not," saith the same apostle, "that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism unto death."[2] How? By faith. For this is not actually completed in us so long as we are still "groaning within ourselves, and waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body: for we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."[3]

26. Remember how often I repeat this to you, that we are not to think that we ought to be made happy and free from all difficulties in this present life, and are therefore at liberty to murmur profanely against God when we are straitened in the things of this world, as if He were not performing what He promised. He hath indeed promised the things which are necessary for this life, but the consolations which mitigate the misery of our present lot are very different from the joys of those who are perfect in blessedness. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me," saith the believer, "Thy comforts, O Lord, delight my soul."[4] Let us not therefore murmur because of difficulties; let us not lose that breadth of cheerfulness, of which it is written, "Rejoicing in hope," because this follows,—"patient in tribulation."[5] The new life, therefore, is meanwhile begun in faith, and maintained by hope: for it shall only then be perfect when this mortal shall be swallowed up in life, and death swallowed up in victory; when the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed; when we shall be changed, and made like the angels: for "we shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed."[6] Again, the Lord saith, "They shall be equal unto the angels."[7] We now are apprehended by Him in fear by faith: then we shall apprehend Him in love by sight. For "whilst we are at home in

[1] Hab. ii. 4. [2] Rom. vi. 3, 4. [3] Rom. viii. 23, 25.
[4] Ps. xciv. 19. [5] Rom. xii. 12.
[6] 1 Cor. xv. 54, 26, 51—the last of these verses being rendered by Augustine here, not as in the English version, but as given above.
[7] Luke xx. 36.

the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight."[1] Hence the apostle himself, who says, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus," confesses frankly that he has not attained to it. "Brethren," he says, "I count not myself to have apprehended."[2] Since, however, our hope is sure, because of the truth of the promise, when he said elsewhere, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death," he adds these words, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."[3] We walk, therefore, in actual labour, but in hope of rest, in the flesh of the old life, but in faith of the new. For he says again: "The body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

27. Both the authority of the Divine Scriptures and the consent of the whole Church spread throughout the world have combined to ordain the annual commemoration of these things at Easter, by observances which are, as you now see, full of spiritual significance. From the Old Testament Scriptures we are not taught as to the precise day of holding Easter, beyond the limitation to the period between the 14th and 21st days of the first month; but because we know from the Gospel beyond doubt which days of the week were signalized in succession by the Lord's crucifixion, His resting in the grave, and His resurrection, the observance of these days has been enjoined in addition by Councils of the Fathers, and the whole Christian world has arrived unanimously at the persuasion that this is the proper mode of observing Easter.

CHAP. XV. 28.[4] The Fast of Forty Days has its warrant both in the Old Testament, from the fasting of Moses[5] and of

[1] 2 Cor. v. 6, 7. [2] Phil. iii. 12, 13. [3] Rom. vi. 4.

[4] In translating, we have ventured to take this title of Chap. xv. out of the place which the Benedictines have given to it, in the middle of a sentence of the preceding paragraph. There it almost hopelessly bewildered the reader. Here it prepares him for a new topic.

[5] Ex. xxxiv. 28.

Elijah,[1] and in the Gospel from the fact that our Lord fasted the same number of days;[2] proving thereby that the Gospel is not at variance with the Law and the Prophets. For the Law and the Prophets are represented in the persons of Moses and Elijah respectively; between whom also He appeared in glory on the Mount, that what the apostle says of Him, that He is "witnessed unto both by the Law and the Prophets,"[3] might be made more clearly manifest. Now, in what part of the year could the observance of the Fast of Forty Days be more appropriately placed, than in that which immediately precedes and borders on the time of the Lord's Passion? For by it is signified this life of toil, the chief work in which is to exercise self-control, in abstaining from the world's friendship, which never ceases deceitfully caressing us, and scattering profusely around us its bewitching allurements. As to the reason why this life of toil and self-control is symbolized by the number 40, it seems to me that the number ten (in which is the perfection of our blessedness, as in the number eight, because it returns to the unit) has a like place in this number [as the unit has in giving its significance to eight];[4] and therefore I regard the number forty as a fit symbol for this life, because in it the creature (of which the symbolical number is seven) cleaves to the Creator, in whom is revealed that unity of the Trinity which is to be published while time lasts throughout this whole world,—a world swept by four winds, constituted of four elements, and experiencing the changes of four seasons in the year. Now four times ten [seven added to three] are forty; but the number forty reckoned in along with [one of] its parts adds the number ten, [as seven reckoned in along with one of its parts adds the unit,] and the total is fifty,—the symbol, as it were, of the reward of the toil and self-control.[5] For it is not without

[1] 1 Kings xix. 8. [2] Matt. iv. 2. [3] Rom. iii. 21.

[4] Compare "octavus qui et primus," and the remarks on the meaning of the number 8 in § 23.

[5] We give the original of this very obscure paragraph:—"Numero autem quadragenario vitam istam propter ea figurari arbitror, quia denarius in quo est perfectio beatitudinis nostræ, sicut in octonario, quia redit ad primum, ita in hoc mihi videtur exprimi: quia creatura, quæ septenario figuratur adhæret Creatori in quo declaratur unitas Trinitatis per universum mundum tempora-

reason that the Lord Himself continued for forty days on this earth and in this life in fellowship with His disciples after His resurrection, and, when He ascended into heaven, sent the promised Holy Spirit, after an interval of ten days more, when the day of Pentecost was fully come. This fiftieth day, moreover, has wrapped up in it another holy mystery:[1] for 7 times 7 days are 49. And when we return to the beginning of another seven, and add the eighth, which is also the first day of the week, we have the 50 days complete; which period of fifty days we celebrate after the Lord's resurrection, as representing not toil, but rest and gladness. For this reason we do not fast in them; and in praying we stand upright, which is an emblem of resurrection. Hence, also, every Lord's day during the fifty days, this usage is observed at the altar, and the Alleluia is sung, which signifies that our future exercise shall consist wholly in praising God, as it is written: "Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, O Lord: they will be still (*i.e.* eternally) praising Thee."[2]

CHAP. XVI. 29. The fiftieth day is also commended to us in Scripture; and not only in the Gospel, by the fact that on that day the Holy Spirit descended, but also in the books of the Old Testament. For in them we learn, that after the Jews observed the first passover with the slaying of the lamb as appointed, 50 days intervened between that day and the day on which upon Mount Sinai there was given to Moses the Law written with the finger of God;[3] and this "finger of God" is in the Gospels most plainly declared to signify the Holy Spirit: for where one evangelist quotes our Lord's words thus, "I with the finger of God cast out devils,"[4] another quotes them thus, "I cast out devils by the Spirit of God."[5] Who would not prefer the joy which these divine mysteries impart, when the light of healing truth beams from them on the

liter annuntianda; qui mundus et a quatuor ventis delimatur et quatuor elementis erigitur, et quatuor anni temporum vicibus variatur. Decem autem quater in quadraginta consummantur, quadragenarius autem partibus suis computatus, addit ipsum denarium et fiunt quinquaginta tanquam merces laboris et continentiæ."

[1] Sacramentum. [2] Ps. lxxxiv. 5. [3] Ex. xii. xix. xx. xxxi.
[4] Luke xi. 20. [5] Matt. xii. 28.

soul to all the kingdoms of this world, even though these were held in perfect prosperity and peace? May we not say, that as the two seraphim answer each other in singing the praise of the Most High, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts,"[1] so the Old Testament and the New, in perfect harmony, give forth their testimony to sacred truth? The lamb is slain, the passover is celebrated, and after 50 days the Law is given, which inspires fear, written by the finger of God. Christ is slain, being led as a lamb to the slaughter, as Isaiah testifies;[2] the true Passover is celebrated; and after 50 days is given the Holy Spirit, who is the finger of God, and whose fruit is love, and who is therefore opposed to men who seek their own, and consequently bear a grievous yoke and heavy burden, and find no rest for their souls; for love "seeketh not her own."[3] Therefore there is no rest in the unloving spirit of heretics, whom the apostle declares guilty of conduct like that of the magicians of Pharaoh, saying, "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest to all men, as theirs also was."[4] For because through this corruptness of mind they were utterly disquieted, they failed at the third miracle, confessing that the Spirit of God which was in Moses was opposed to them: for in owning their failure, they said, "This is the finger of God."[5] The Holy Spirit, who shows Himself reconciled and gracious to the meek and lowly in heart, and gives them rest, shows Himself an inexorable adversary to the proud and haughty, and vexes them with disquiet. Of this disquiet those despicable insects were a figure, under which Pharaoh's magicians owned themselves foiled, saying, "This is the finger of God."

30. Read the book of Exodus, and observe the number of days between the first passover and the giving of the Law. God speaks to Moses in the desert of Sinai on the first day of the third month. Mark, then, this as one day of the month, and then observe what (among other things) the Lord said on that day: "Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and

[1] Isa. vi. 3. [2] Isa. liii. 7. [3] 1 Cor. xiii. 5.
[4] 2 Tim. iii. 8. [5] Ex. viii. 19.

to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day; for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai."[1] The Law was accordingly given on the third day of the month. Now reckon the days between the 14th day of the first month, the day of the passover, and the 3d day of the third month, and you have 17 days of the first month, 30 of the second, and 3 of the third—50 in all. The Law in the Ark of the Testimony represents holiness in the Lord's body, by whose resurrection is promised to us the future rest; for our receiving of which, love is breathed into us by the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit had not then been given, for Jesus had not yet been glorified.[2] Hence that prophetic song, "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy strength" [holiness, LXX.].[3] Where there is rest, there is holiness. Wherefore we have now received a pledge of it, that we may love and desire it. For to the rest belonging to the other life, whereunto we are brought by that transition from this life of which the passover is a symbol, all are now invited in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

CHAP. XVII. 31. Hence also, in the number of the large fishes which our Lord after His resurrection, showing this new life, commanded to be taken on the right side of the ship, there is found the number 50 three times multiplied, with the addition of three more [the symbol of the Trinity] to make the holy mystery more apparent; and the disciples' nets were not broken,[4] because in that new life there shall be no schism caused by the disquiet of heretics. Then [in this new life] man, made perfect and at rest, purified in body and in soul by the pure words of God, which are like silver purged from its dross, seven times refined,[5] shall receive his reward, the denarius;[6] so that with that reward the numbers 10 and 7 meet in him. For in this number [17] there is found, as in other numbers representing a combination of symbols, a wonderful mystery. Nor is it without good reason that the seventeenth Psalm[7] is the only one which is

[1] Ex. xix. 10, 11. [2] John vii. 39. [3] Ps. cxxxii. 8.
[4] John xxi. 6, 11. [5] Ps. xii. 6. [6] Matt. xx. 9, 10.
[7] The eighteenth in the English Bible.

given complete in the book of Kings,[1] because it signifies that kingdom in which we shall have no enemy. For its title is, "A Psalm of David, in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul." For of whom is David the type, but of Him who, according to the flesh, was born of the seed of David?[2] He in His Church, that is, in His body, still endures the malice of enemies. Therefore the words which from heaven fell upon the ear of that persecutor whom Jesus slew by His voice, and whom He transformed into a part of His body (as the food which we use becomes a part of ourselves), were these, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"[3] And when shall this His body be finally delivered from enemies? Is it not when the last enemy, Death, shall be destroyed? It is to that time that the number of the 153 fishes pertains. For if the number 17 itself be the side of an arithmetical triangle,[4] formed by placing above each other rows of units, increasing in number from 1 to 17, the whole sum of these units is 153: since 1 and 2 make 3; 3 and 3, 6; 6 and 4, 10; 10 and 5, 15; 15 and 6, 21; and so on: continue this up to 17, the total is 153.

32. The celebration of Easter and Pentecost is therefore most firmly based on Scripture. As to the observance of the forty days before Easter, this has been confirmed by the practice of the Church; as also the separation of the eight days of the neophytes, in such order that the eighth of these coincides with the first. The custom of singing the Alleluia on those 50 days only in the Church is not universal; for in other places it is sung also at various other times, but on these days it is sung everywhere. Whether the custom of standing at prayer on these days, and on all the Lord's days,

[1] 2 Sam. xxii. 2-51. The title of that book is in the LXX. the 2d book of Kings.
[2] Rom. i. 3.
[3] Acts ix. 4.
[4] Such a triangle as this:

is everywhere observed or not, I do not know; nevertheless, I have told you what guides the Church in this usage, and it is in my opinion sufficiently obvious.[1]

CHAP. XVIII. 33. As to the feet-washing, since the Lord recommended this because of its being an example of that humility which He came to teach, as He himself afterwards explained, the question has arisen at what time it is best, by literal performance of this work, to give public instruction in the important duty which it illustrates, and this time [of Lent] was suggested in order that the lesson taught by it might make a deeper and more serious impression. Many, however, have not accepted this as a custom, lest it should be thought to belong to the ordinance of baptism; and some have not hesitated to deny it any place among our ceremonies. Some, however, in order to connect its observance with the more sacred associations of this solemn season, and at the same time to prevent its being confounded with baptism in any way, have selected for this ceremony either the eighth day itself, or that on which the third eighth day occurs, because of the great significance of the number three in many holy mysteries.

34. I am surprised at your expressing a desire that I should write anything in regard to those ceremonies which are found different in different countries, because there is no necessity for my doing this; and, moreover, one most excellent rule must be observed in regard to these customs, when they do not in any way oppose either true doctrine or sound morality, but contain some incentives to the better life, viz., that wherever we see them observed, or know them to be established, we should not only refrain from finding fault with them, but even recommend them by our approval and imitation, unless restrained by fear of doing greater harm than good by this course, through the infirmity of others. We are not, however, to be restrained by this, if more good is to be expected from our consenting with those who are zealous for the ceremony, than loss to be feared from our displeasing those who protest against it. In such a case we

[1] He refers to the significance of the standing upright as an emblem of resurrection.

ought by all means to adopt it, especially if it be something in defence of which Scripture can be alleged: as in the singing of hymns and psalms, for which we have on record both the example and the precepts of the Lord and of His apostles. In this religious exercise, so useful for inducing a devotional frame of mind and inflaming the strength of love to God, there is diversity of usage, and in Africa the members of the Church are rather too indifferent in regard to it; on which account the Donatists reproach us with our grave chanting of the divine songs of the prophets in our churches, while they inflame their passions in their revels by the singing of psalms of human composition, which rouse them like the stirring notes of the trumpet on the battle-field. But when brethren are assembled in the church, why should not the time be devoted to singing of sacred songs, excepting of course while reading or preaching[1] is going on, or while the presiding minister prays aloud, or the united prayer of the congregation is led by the deacon's voice? At the other intervals not thus occupied, I do not see what could be a more excellent, useful, and holy exercise for a Christian congregation.

CHAP. XIX.[2] 35. I cannot, however, sanction with my approbation those ceremonies which are departures from the custom of the Church, and are instituted on the pretext of being symbolical of some holy mystery; although, for the sake of avoiding offence to the piety of some and the pugnacity of others, I do not venture to condemn severely many things of this kind. But this I deplore, and have too much occasion to do so, that comparatively little attention is paid to many of the most wholesome rites which Scripture has enjoined; and that so many false notions everywhere prevail, that more severe rebuke would be administered to a man who should touch the ground with his feet bare during the octaves (before his baptism), than to one who drowned his intellect in drunkenness. My opinion therefore is, that wher-

[1] Preaching. The word in the original is "disputatur,"—something much more lively and entertaining.

[2] I have taken the liberty here of putting the beginning of the chapter and paragraph a sentence further on than in the Benedictine edition, so as to finish in sec. 34 the remarks on psalm-singing.

ever it is possible, all those things should be abolished without hesitation, which neither have warrant in Holy Scripture, nor are found to have been appointed by councils of bishops, nor are confirmed by the practice of the universal Church, but are so infinitely various, according to the different customs of different places, that it is with difficulty, if at all, that the reasons which guided men in appointing them can be discovered. For even although nothing be found, perhaps, in which they are against the true faith; yet the Christian religion, which God in His mercy made free, appointing to her sacraments very few in number, and very easily observed, is by these burdensome ceremonies so oppressed, that the condition of the Jewish Church itself is preferable: for although they have not known the time of their freedom, they are subjected to burdens imposed by the law of God, not by the vain conceits of men. The Church of God, however, being meanwhile so constituted as to enclose much chaff and many tares, bears with many things; yet if anything be contrary to the faith or to holy life, she does not approve of it either by silence or by practice.

CHAP. XX. 36. Accordingly, that which you wrote as to certain brethren abstaining from the use of animal food, on the ground of its being ceremonially unclean, is most clearly contrary to the faith and to sound doctrine. If I were to enter on anything like a full discussion of this matter, it might be thought by some that there was some obscurity in the precepts of the apostle in this matter; whereas he, among many other things which he said on this subject, expressed his abhorrence of this opinion of the heretics in these words: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."[1]

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 1-5.

Again, in another place, he says, concerning these things: "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."[1] Read the rest for yourself, and read these passages to others—to as many as you can—in order that, seeing that they have been called to liberty, they may not make void the grace of God toward them; only let them not use their liberty for an occasion to serve the flesh: let them not refuse to practise the purpose of curbing carnal appetite, abstinence from some kinds of food, on the pretext that it is unlawful to do so under the promptings of superstition or unbelief.

37. As to those who read futurity by taking at random a text from the pages of the Gospels, although it is better that they should do this than go to consult spirits of divination, nevertheless it is, in my opinion, a censurable practice to try to turn to secular affairs and the vanity of this life those divine oracles which were intended to teach us concerning the higher life.

CHAP. XXI. 38. If you do not consider that I have now written enough in answer to your questions, you must have little knowledge of my capacities or of my engagements. For so far am I from being, as you have thought, acquainted with everything, that I read nothing in your letter with more sadness than this statement, both because it is most manifestly untrue, and because I am surprised that you should not be aware, that not only are many things unknown to me in countless other departments, but that even in the Scriptures themselves the things which I do not know are many more than the things which I know. But I cherish a hope in the name of Christ, which is not without its reward, because I have not only believed the testimony of my God that "on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets;"[2] but I have myself proved it, and daily prove it, by experience. For there is no holy mystery, and no difficult passage of the word of God, in which, when it is opened up to me, I do not find these same commandments: for "the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience,

[1] Tit. i. 15.

[2] Matt. xxii. 40.

and of faith unfeigned;"[1] and "love is the fulfilling of the law."[2]

39. I beseech you therefore also, my dearly beloved, whether studying these or other writings, so to read and so to learn as to bear in mind what hath been most truly said, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth;"[3] but charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Let knowledge therefore be used as a kind of scaffolding by which may be erected the building of charity, which shall endure for ever when knowledge faileth.[4] Knowledge, if applied as a means to charity, is most useful; but apart from this high end, it has been proved not only superfluous, but even pernicious. I know, however, how holy meditation keeps you safe under the shadow of the wings of our God. These things I have stated, though briefly, because I know that this same charity of yours, which "vaunteth not itself," will prompt you to lend and read this letter to many.

LETTERS LVI. AND LVII.

are addressed (A.D. 400) to Celer, exhorting him to forsake the Donatist schismatics. They may be omitted, being brief, and containing no new argument.

LETTER LVIII.

(A.D. 401.)

TO MY NOBLE AND WORTHY LORD PAMMACHIUS, MY SON, DEARLY BELOVED IN THE BOWELS OF CHRIST, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. THE good works which spring from the grace of Christ in you have given you a claim to be esteemed by us His members, and have made you as truly known and as much beloved by us as you could be. For even were I daily seeing your face, this could add nothing to the completeness of the acquaintance with you which I now have, when in the shining light of one of your actions I have seen your inner being, fair with the loveliness of peace, and beaming with the brightness of

[1] 1 Tim. i. 5. [2] Rom. xiii. 10. [3] 1 Cor. viii. 1. [4] 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 8.

truth. Seeing this has made me know you, and knowing you has made me love you; and therefore, in addressing you, I write to one who, notwithstanding our distance from each other, has become known to me, and is my beloved friend. The bond which binds us together is indeed of earlier date, and we were living united under One Head: for had you not been rooted in His love, the Catholic unity would not have been so dear to you, and you would not have dealt as you have done with your African tenants[1] settled in the midst of the consular province of Numidia, the very country in which the folly of the Donatists began, addressing them in such terms, and encouraging them with such enthusiasm, as to persuade them with unhesitating devotion to choose that course which they believed that a man of your character and position would not adopt on other grounds than truth ascertained and acknowledged, and to submit themselves, though so remote from you, to the same Head; so that along with yourself they are reckoned for ever as members of Him by whose command they are for the time dependent upon you.

2. Embracing you, therefore, as known to me by this transaction, I am moved by joyful feelings to congratulate you in Christ Jesus our Lord, and to send you this letter as a proof of my heart's love towards you; for I cannot do more. I beseech you, however, not to measure the amount of my love by this letter; but by means of this letter, when you have read it, pass on by the unseen inner passage which thought opens up into my heart, and see what is there felt towards you. For to the eye of love that sanctuary of love shall be unveiled which we shut against the disquieting trifles of this world when there we worship God; and there you will see the ecstasy of my joy in your good work,—an ecstasy which I cannot describe with tongue or pen, glowing and burning in the offering of praise to Him by whose inspiration you were made willing, and by whose help you were made able to serve Him in this way. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!"[2]

3. Oh how we desire in Africa to see such work as this by which you have gladdened us done by many, who are, like

[1] Coloni. [2] 1 Cor. ix. 15.

yourself, senators in the State, and sons of the holy Church! It is, however, hazardous to give them this exhortation: they may refuse to follow it, and the enemies of the Church will take advantage of this to deceive the weak, as if they had gained a victory over us in the minds of those who disregarded our counsel. But it is safe for me to express gratitude to you; for you have already done that by which, in the emancipation of those who were weak, the enemies of the Church are confounded. I have therefore thought it sufficient to ask you to read this letter with friendly boldness to any to whom you can do so on the ground of their Christian profession. For thus learning what you have achieved, they will believe that that, about which as an impossibility they are now indifferent, can be done in Africa. As to the snares which these heretics contrive in the perversity of their hearts, I have resolved not to speak of them in this letter, because I have been only amused at their imagining that they could gain any advantage over your mind, which Christ holds as His possession. You will hear them, however, from my brethren, whom I earnestly commend to your Excellency: they fear lest you should disdain some things which to you might seem unnecessary in connection with the great and unlooked for salvation of those men over whom, in consequence of your work, their Catholic Mother rejoices.

LETTER LIX.

(A.D. 401.)

TO MY MOST BLESSED LORD AND VENERABLE FATHER VICTORINUS, MY BROTHER IN THE PRIESTHOOD, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. YOUR summons to the Council reached me on the fifth day before the Ides of November, in the evening, and found me very much indisposed, so that I could not possibly attend. However, I submit to your pious and wise judgment whether certain perplexities which the summons occasioned were due to my own ignorance or to sufficient grounds. I read in that summons that it was written also to the districts of Mauri-

tania, which, as we know, have their own primates. Now, if these provinces were to be represented in a Council held in Numidia, it was by all means proper that the names of some of the more eminent bishops who are in Mauritania should be attached to the circular letter; and not finding this, I have been greatly surprised. Moreover, to the bishops of Numidia it has been addressed in such a confused and careless manner, that my own name I find in the third place, although I know my proper order to be much further down in the roll of bishops. This wrongs others, and grieves me. Moreover, our venerable father and colleague, Xantippus of Tagosa, says that the primacy belongs to him, and by very many he is regarded as the primate, and he issues such letters as you have sent. Even supposing that this be a mistake, which your Holiness can easily discover and correct, certainly his name should not have been omitted in the summons which you have issued. If his name had been placed in the middle of the list, and not in the first line, I would have wondered much; how much greater, then, is my surprise, when I find in it no mention whatever made of him who, above all others, behoved to be present in the Council, that by the bishops of all the Numidian churches this question of the order of the primacy might be debated before any other!

2. For these reasons, I might even hesitate to come to the Council, lest the summons in which so many flagrant mistakes are found should be a forgery; even were I not hindered both by the shortness of the notice, and manifold other important engagements standing in the way. I therefore beg you, most blessed prelate, to excuse me, and to be pleased to give attention, in the first instance, to bring about between your Holiness and the aged Xantippus a cordial mutual understanding as to the question which of you ought to summon the Council; or at least, as I think would be still better, let both of you, without prejudging the claim of either, conjointly call together our colleagues, especially those who have been nearly as long in the episcopate as yourselves, who may easily discover and decide which of you has truth on his side,[1] that

[1] The primacy in Numidia belonged not to the bishop of the most important town, but to the oldest bishop.

this question may be settled first among a few of you; and then, when the mistake has been rectified, let the younger bishops be gathered together, who, having no others whom it would be either possible or right for them to accept as witnesses in this matter but yourselves, are meanwhile at a loss to know to which of you the preference is to be given.

I have sent this letter sealed with a ring which represents a man's profile.

LETTER LX.

(A.D. 401.)

TO FATHER AURELIUS, MY LORD MOST BLESSED, AND REVERED WITH MOST JUSTLY MERITED RESPECT, MY BROTHER IN THE PRIESTHOOD, MOST SINCERELY BELOVED, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. I HAVE received no letter from your Holiness since we parted; but I have now read a letter of your Grace concerning Donatus and his brother, and I have long hesitated as to the reply which I ought to give. After frequently reconsidering what is in such a case conducive to the welfare of those whom we serve in Christ, and seek to nourish in Him, nothing has occurred to me which would alter my opinion that it is not right to give occasion for God's servants to think that promotion to a better position is more readily given to those who have become worse. Such a rule would make monks less careful of falling, and a most grievous wrong would be done to the order of clergy, if those who have deserted their duty as monks be chosen to serve as clergy, seeing that our custom is to select for that office only the more tried and superior men of those who continue faithful to their calling as monks; unless, perchance, the common people are to be taught to joke at our expense, saying "a bad monk makes a good clerk," as they are wont to say that "a poor flute-player makes a good singer." It would be an intolerable calamity if we were to encourage the monks to such fatal pride, and were to consent to brand with so grievous disgrace the clerical order to which we ourselves belong: seeing that sometimes even a good monk

is scarcely qualified to be a good clerk; for though he be proficient in self-denial, he may lack the necessary instruction, or be disqualified by some personal defect.

2. I believe, however, that your Holiness understood these monks to have left the monastery with my consent, in order that they might rather be useful to the people of their own district; but this was not the case: of their own accord they departed, of their own accord they deserted us, notwithstanding my resisting, from a regard to their welfare, to the utmost of my power. As to Donatus, seeing that he has obtained ordination before we could arrive at any decision in the Council[1] as to his case, do as your wisdom may guide you; it may be that his proud obstinacy has been subdued. But as to his brother, who was the chief cause of Donatus leaving the monastery, I know not what to write, since you know what I think of him. I do not presume to oppose what may seem best to one of your wisdom, rank, and piety; and I hope with all my heart that you will do whatever you judge most profitable for the members of the Church.

LETTER LXI.

(A.D. 401.)

TO HIS WELL-BELOVED AND HONOURABLE BROTHER THEODORUS, BISHOP AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. I HAVE resolved to commit to writing in this letter what I said when you and I were conversing together as to the terms on which we would welcome clergy of the party of Donatus desiring to become Catholics, in order that, if any one asked you what are our sentiments and practice in regard to this, you might exhibit these by producing what I have written with my own hand. Be assured, therefore, that we detest nothing in the Donatist clergy but that which renders them schismatics and heretics, namely, their dissent from the unity and truth of the Catholic Church, in their not remaining in peace with the people of God, which is spread abroad throughout the world, and in their refusing to recognise the baptism

[1] The Council held at Carthage in September 401.

of Christ in those who have received it. This their grievous error, therefore, we reject; but the good name of God which they bear, and His sacrament which they have received, we acknowledge in them, and embrace it with reverence and love. But for this very reason we grieve over their wandering, and long to gain them for God by the love of Christ, that they may have within the peace of the Church that holy sacrament for their salvation, which they meanwhile have beyond the pale of the Church for their destruction. If, therefore, there be taken away from between us the evil things which proceed from men, and if the good which comes from God and belongs to both parties in common be duly honoured, there will ensue such brotherly concord, such amiable peace, that the love of Christ shall gain the victory in men's hearts over the temptation of the devil.

2. When, therefore; any come to us from the party of Donatus, we do not welcome the evil which belongs to them, viz. their error and schism: these, the only obstacles to our concord, are removed from between us, and we embrace our brethren, standing with them, as the apostle says, in "the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace,"[1] and acknowledging in them the good things which are divine, as their holy baptism, the blessing conferred by ordination, their profession of self-denial, their vow of celibacy, their faith in the Trinity, and such like; all which things were indeed theirs before, but "profited them nothing, because they had not charity." For what truth is there in the profession of Christian charity by him who does not embrace Christian unity? When, therefore, they come to the Catholic Church, they gain thereby not what they already possessed, but something which they had not before,—namely, that those things which they possessed begin then to be profitable to them. For in the Catholic Church they obtain the root of charity in the bond of peace and in the fellowship of unity: so that all the sacraments of truth which they hold serve not to condemn, but to deliver them. The branches ought not to boast that their wood is the wood of the vine, not of the thorn; for if they do not live by union to the root, they shall, notwithstand-

[1] Eph. iv. 3.

ing their outward appearance, be cast into the fire. But of some branches which were broken off the apostle says that "God is able to graff them in again."[1] Wherefore, beloved brother, if you see any one of the Donatist party in doubt as to the place into which they shall be welcomed by us, show them this writing in my own hand, which is familiar to you, and let them have it to read if they desire it; for "I call God for a record upon my soul," that I will welcome them on such terms as that they shall retain not only the baptism of Christ which they have received, but also the honour due to their vow of holiness and to their self-denying virtue.

LETTER LXII.

(A.D. 401.)

ALYPIUS, AUGUSTINE, AND SAMSUCIUS, AND THE BRETHREN WHO ARE WITH THEM, SEND GREETING IN THE LORD TO SEVERUS,[2] THEIR LORD MOST BLESSED, AND WITH ALL REVERENCE MOST BELOVED, THEIR BROTHER IN TRUTH, AND PARTNER IN THE PRIESTLY OFFICE, AND TO ALL THE BRETHREN WHO ARE WITH HIM.

1. WHEN we came to Subsana, and inquired into the things which had been done there in our absence and against our will, we found some things exactly as we had heard reported, and some things otherwise, but all things calling for lamentation and forbearance; and we endeavoured, in so far as the Lord gave His help, to put them right by reproof, admonition, and prayer. What distressed us most, since your departure from the place, was that the brethren who went thence to you were allowed to go without a guide, which we beg you to excuse, as having taken place not from malice, but from an excessive caution. For, believing as they did that these men were sent by our son Timotheus in order to move you to be displeased with us, and being anxious to reserve the whole matter untouched until we should come (when they

[1] Rom. xi. 23.

[2] Severus, bishop of Milevi in Numidia, had at one time been an inmate of the monastery of Augustine, and was held by him in the highest esteem.

hoped to see you along with us), they thought that the departure of these men would be prevented if they were not furnished with a guide. That they did wrong in thus attempting to detain the brethren we admit,—nay, who could doubt it? Hence also arose the story which was told to Fossor,[1] that Timotheus had already gone to you with these same brethren. This was wholly false, but the statement was not made by the presbyter; and that Carcedonius our brother was wholly unaware of all these things, was most clearly proved to us by all the ways in which such things are susceptible of proof.

2. But why spend more time on these circumstances? Our son Timotheus, being greatly disturbed because he found himself, altogether in spite of his own wish, in such unlooked for perplexity, informed us that, when you were urging him to serve God at Subsana, he broke forth vehemently, and swore that he would never on any account leave you. And when we questioned him as to his present wish, he replied that by this oath he was precluded from going to the place which we had previously wished him to occupy, even though his mind were set at rest by the evidence given as to his freedom from restraint. When we showed him that he would not be guilty of violating his oath if a bar was put in the way of his being with you, not by him, but by you, in order to avoid a scandal; seeing that he could by his oath bind only his own will, not yours, and he admitted that you had not bound yourself reciprocally by your oath; at last he said, as it became a servant of God and a son of the Church to say, that he would without hesitation agree to whatever should seem good to us, along with your Holiness, to appoint concerning him. We therefore ask, and by the love of Christ implore you, in the exercise of your sagacity, to remember all that we spoke to each other in this matter, and to make us glad by your reply to this letter. For "we that are strong" (if, indeed, amid so great and perilous temptations, we may presume to claim this title) are bound, as the apostle says, to "bear the infirmities of the weak."[2] Our brother Timotheus has not written to your Holiness, because your venerable brother has reported all to

[1] Tillemont suggests that this may be "the sexton," and not a proper name.
[2] Rom. xv. 1.

you. May you be joyful in the Lord, and remember us, our lord most blessed, and with all reverence most beloved, our brother in sincerity.

LETTER LXIII.

(A.D. 401.)

TO SEVERUS, MY LORD MOST BLESSED AND VENERABLE, A BROTHER WORTHY OF BEING EMBRACED WITH UNFEIGNED LOVE, AND PARTNER IN THE PRIESTLY OFFICE, AND TO THE BRETHREN THAT ARE WITH HIM, AUGUSTINE AND THE BRETHREN WITH HIM SEND GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. If I frankly say all that this case compels me to say, you may perhaps ask me where is my concern for the preservation of charity; but if I may not thus say all that the case demands, may I not ask you where is the liberty conceded to friendship? Hesitating between these two alternatives, I have chosen to write so much as may justify me without accusing you. You wrote that you were surprised that we, notwithstanding our great grief at what was done, acquiesced in it, when it might have been remedied by our correction; as if when things wrongly done have been afterwards, so far as possible, corrected, they are no longer to be deplored; and more particularly, as if it were absurd for us to acquiesce in that which, though wrongly done, it is impossible for us to undo. Wherefore, my brother, sincerely esteemed as such, your surprise may cease. For Timotheus was ordained a subdeacon at Subsana against my advice and desire, at the time when the decision of his case was still pending as the subject of deliberation and conference between us. Behold me still grieving over this, although he has now returned to you; and we do not regret that in our consenting to his return we obeyed your will.

2. May it please you to hear how, by rebuke, admonition, and prayer, we had, even before he went away from this place, corrected the wrong which had been done, lest it should appear to you that up to that time nothing had been corrected by us because he had not returned to you. By *rebuke*, addressing

ourselves first to Timotheus himself, because he did not obey you, but went away to your Holiness without consulting our brother Carcedonius, to which act of his the origin of this affliction is to be traced; and afterwards censuring the presbyter (Carcedonius) and Verinus, through whom we found that the ordination of Timotheus had been managed. When all of these admitted, under our rebuke, that in all the things alleged they had done wrong and begged forgiveness, we would have acted with undue haughtiness if we had refused to believe that they were sufficiently corrected. For they could not make that to be not done which had been done; and we by our rebuke were not expecting or desiring to do more than bring them to acknowledge their faults, and grieve over them. By *admonition:* first, in warning all never to dare again to do such things, lest they should incur God's wrath; and then especially charging Timotheus, who said that he was bound only by his oath to go to your Grace, that if your Holiness, considering all that we had spoken together on the matter, should, as we hoped might be the case, decide not to have him with you, out of regard for the weak for whom Christ died, who might be offended, and for the discipline of the Church, which it is perilous to disregard, seeing that he had begun to be a reader in this diocese,—he should then, being free from the bond of his oath, devote himself with undisturbed mind to the service of God, to whom we are to give an account of all our actions. By such admonitions as we were able to give, we had also persuaded our brother Carcedonius to submit with perfect resignation to whatever might be seen to be necessary in regard to him for the preservation of the discipline of the Church. By *prayer*, moreover, we had laboured to correct ourselves, commending both the guidance and the issues of our counsels to the mercy of God, and seeking that if any sinful anger had wounded us, we might be cured by taking refuge under His healing right hand. Behold how much we had corrected by rebuke, admonition, and prayer!

3. And now, considering the bond of charity, that we may not be possessed by Satan,—for we are not ignorant of his devices,—what else ought we to have done than obey your wish, seeing that you thought that what had been done could

be remedied in no other way than by our giving back to your authority him in whose person you complained that wrong had been done to you. Even our brother Carcedonius' himself consented to this, not indeed without much distress of spirit, on account of which I entreat you to pray for him, but eventually without opposition, believing that he submitted to Christ in submitting to you. Nay, even when I still thought it might be our duty to consider whether I should not write a second letter to you, my brother, while Timotheus still remained here, he himself, with filial reverence, feared to displease you, and cut my deliberations short by not only consenting, but even urging, that Timotheus should be restored to you.

4. I therefore, brother Severus, leave my case to be decided by you. For I am sure that Christ dwells in your heart, and by Him I beseech you to ask counsel from Him, submitting your mind to His direction regarding the question whether, when a man had begun to be a Reader in the Church confided to my care, having read, not once only, but a second and a third time, at Subsana, and in company with the presbyter of the Church of Subsana had done the same also at Turres and Ciza and Verbalis, it is either possible or right that he be pronounced to have never been a Reader. And as we have, in obedience to God, corrected that which was afterwards done contrary to our will, do you also, in obedience to Him, correct in like manner that which was formerly, through your not knowing the facts of the case, wrongly done. For I have no fear of your failing to perceive what a door is opened for breaking down the discipline of the Church, if, when a clergyman of any church has sworn to one of another church that he will not leave him, that other encourage him to remain with him, alleging that he does so that he may not be the occasion of the breaking of an oath; seeing that he who forbids this, and declines to allow the other to remain with him (because that other could by his vow bind only his own conscience), unquestionably preserves the order which is necessary to peace in a way which none can justly censure.

LETTER LXIV.

(A.D. 401.)

TO MY LORD QUINTIANUS, MY MOST BELOVED BROTHER AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. We do not disdain to look upon bodies which are defective in beauty, especially seeing that our souls themselves are not yet so beautiful as we hope that they shall be when He who is of ineffable beauty shall have appeared, in whom, though now we see Him not, we believe; for then "we shall be like Him," when "we shall see Him as He is."[1] If you receive my counsel in a kindly and brotherly spirit, I exhort you to think thus of your soul, as we do of our own, and not presumptuously imagine that it is already perfect in beauty; but, as the apostle enjoins, "rejoice in hope," and obey the precept which he annexes to this, when he says, "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation:"[2] "for we are saved by hope," as he says again; "but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."[3] Let not this patience be wanting in thee, but with a good conscience "wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."[4]

2. It is, of course, obvious that if you come to us while debarred from communion with the venerable bishop Aurelius, you cannot be admitted to communion with us; but we would act towards you with that same charity which we are assured shall guide his conduct. Your coming to us, however, should not on this account be embarrassing to us, because the duty of submission to this, out of regard to the discipline of the Church, ought to be felt by yourself, especially if you have the approval of your own conscience, which is known to yourself and to God. For if Aurelius has deferred the examination of your case, he has done this not from dislike to you, but from the pressure of other engagements; and if you knew his circumstances as well as you know your own, the delay would

[1] 1 John iii. 2. [2] Rom. xii. 12. [3] Rom. viii. 24, 25. [4] Ps. xxvii. 14.

cause you neither surprise nor sorrow. That it is the same with myself, I entreat you to believe on my word, as you are equally unable to know how I am occupied. But there are other bishops older than I am, and both in authority more worthy and in place more convenient, by whose help you may more easily expedite the affairs now pending in the Church committed to your charge. I have not, however, failed to make mention of your distress, and of the complaint in your letter to my venerable brother and colleague the aged Aurelius, whom I esteem with the respect due to his worth; I took care to acquaint him with your innocence of the things laid to your charge, by sending him a copy of your letter. It was not until a day, or at the most two, before Christmas,[1] that I received the letter in which you informed me of his intention to visit the Church at Badesile, by which you fear lest the people be disturbed and influenced against you. I do not therefore presume to address by letter your people; for I could write a reply to any who had written to me, but how could I put myself forward unasked to write to a people not committed to my care?

3. Nevertheless, what I now say to you, who alone have written to me, may, through you, reach others who should hear it. I charge you then, in the first place, not to bring the Church into reproach by reading in the public assemblies those writings which the Canon of the Church has not acknowledged; for by these, heretics, and especially the Manichæans (of whom I hear that some are lurking, not without encouragement, in your district), are accustomed to subvert the minds of the inexperienced. I am amazed that a man of your wisdom should admonish me to forbid the reception into the monastery of those who have come from you to us, in order that a decree of the Council may be obeyed, and at the same time should forget another decree[2] of the same Council, declaring what are the canonical Scriptures which ought to be read to the people. Read again the proceedings of the Council, and commit them to memory: you

[1] Pridie Natalis Domini.

[2] See Council of Hippo, A.D. 393, Can. 38, and the third Council of Carthage, A.D. 397, Can. 47.

will there find that the Canon which you refer to[1] as prohibiting the indiscriminate reception of applicants for admission to a monastery, was not framed in regard to laymen, but applies to the clergy alone. It is true there is no mention of monasteries in the canon; but it is laid down in general, that no one may receive a clergyman belonging to another diocese [except in such a way as upholds the discipline of the Church]. Moreover, it has been enacted in a recent Council,[2] that any who desert a monastery, or are expelled from one, shall not be elsewhere admitted either to clerical office or to the charge of a monastery. If, therefore, you are in any measure disturbed regarding Privatio, let me inform you that he has not yet been received by us into the monastery; but that I have submitted his case to the aged Aurelius, and will act according to his decision. For it seems strange to me, if a man can be reckoned a Reader who has read only once in public, and on that occasion read writings which are not canonical. If for this reason he is regarded as an ecclesiastical reader, it follows that the writing which he read must be esteemed as sanctioned by the Church. But if the writing be not sanctioned by the Church as canonical, it follows that, although a man may have read it to a congregation, he is not thereby made an ecclesiastical reader, [but is, as before, a layman]. Nevertheless I must, in regard to the young man in question, abide by the decision of the arbiter whom I have named.

4. As to the people of Vigesile, who are to us as well as to you beloved in the bowels of Christ, if they have refused to accept a bishop who has been deposed by a plenary Council in Africa,[3] they act wisely, and cannot be compelled to yield, nor ought to be. And whoever shall attempt to compel them by violence to receive him, will show plainly what is his character, and will make men well understand what his real character was at an earlier time, when he would have had them believe no evil of him. For no one more effectually discovers the worthlessness of his cause, than the man who, employing the secular power, or any other kind of violent means, endeavours by agitating and complaining to recover the ecclesiastical rank which he has forfeited. For his desire

[1] *Ibid.* Can. 21. [2] Council of Carthage, 13th Sept. 401. [3] The same.

is not to yield to Christ service which He claims, but to usurp over Christians an authority which they disown. Brethren, be cautious; great is the craft of the devil, but Christ is the wisdom of God.

LETTER LXV.

(A.D. 402.)

TO THE AGED[1] XANTIPPUS, MY LORD MOST BLESSED AND WORTHY OF VENERATION, AND MY FATHER AND COLLEAGUE IN THE PRIESTLY OFFICE, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. SALUTING your Excellency with the respect due to your worth, and earnestly seeking an interest in your prayers, I beg to submit to the consideration of your wisdom the case of a certain Abundantius, ordained a presbyter in the domain of Strabonia, belonging to my diocese. He had begun to be unfavourably reported of, through his not walking in the way which becomes the servants of God; and I being on this account alarmed, though not believing the rumours without examination, was made more watchful of his conduct, and devoted some pains to obtain, if possible, indisputable evidences of the evil courses with which he was charged. The first thing which I ascertained was, that he had embezzled the money of a countryman, entrusted to him for religious purposes, and could give no satisfactory account of his stewardship. The next thing proved against him, and admitted by his own confession, was, that on Christmas day, on which the fast was observed by the Church of Gippe as by all the other Churches, after taking leave of his colleague the presbyter of Gippe, as if going to his own church about 11 A.M., he remained, without having any ecclesiastic in his company, in the same parish, and dined, supped, and spent the night in the house of a woman of ill fame. It happened that lodging in the same place was one of our clergy of Hippo, who had gone thither; and as the facts were known beyond dispute to this witness, Abundantius could not deny the charge. As to the things

[1] This title in the African Church seems equivalent to Primate when applied to a bishop. See Letter LIX.

which he did deny, I left them to the divine tribunal, passing sentence upon him only in regard to those things which he had not been permitted to conceal. I was afraid to leave him in charge of a Church, especially of one placed as his was, in the very midst of rabid and barking heretics. And when he begged me to give him a letter with a statement of his case to the presbyter of the parish of Armema, in the district of Bulla, from which he had come to us, so as to prevent any exaggerated suspicion there of his character, and in order that he might there live, if possible, a more consistent life, having no duties as a presbyter, I was moved by compassion to do as he desired. At the same time, it was very specially incumbent on me to submit to your wisdom these facts, lest any deception should be practised upon you.

2. I pronounced sentence in his case one hundred days before Easter Sunday, which falls this year on the 7th of April. I have taken care to acquaint you with the date, because of the decree of Council,[1] which I also did not conceal from him, but explained to him the law of the Church, that if he thought anything could be done to reverse my decision, unless he began proceedings with this view within a year, no one would, after the lapse of that time, listen to his pleading. For my own part, my lord most blessed, and father worthy of all veneration, I assure you that if I did not think that these instances of vicious conversation in an ecclesiastic, especially when accompanied with an evil reputation, deserved to be visited with the punishment appointed by the Council, I would be compelled now to attempt to sift things which cannot be known, and either to condemn the accused upon doubtful evidence, or acquit him for want of proof. When a presbyter, upon a day of fasting which was observed as such also in the place in which he was, having taken leave of his colleague in the ministry in that place, and being unattended by any ecclesiastic, ventured to tarry in the house of a woman of ill fame, and to dine and sup and spend the night there, it seemed to me, whatever others might think, that he behoved to be deposed from his office, as I durst not commit to his charge a Church of God. If

[1] Held at Carthage, 13th Sept. 401.

it should so happen that a different opinion be held by the ecclesiastical judges to whom he may appeal, seeing that it has been decreed by the Council[1] that the decision of six bishops be final in the case of a presbyter, let who will commit to him a Church within his jurisdiction, I confess, for my own part, that I fear to entrust any congregation whatever to persons like him, especially when nothing in the way of general good character can be alleged as a reason for excusing these delinquencies; lest, if he were to break forth into some more ruinous wickedness, I should be compelled with sorrow to blame myself for the harm done by his crime.

LETTER LXVI.

(A.D. 402.)

ADDRESSED, WITHOUT SALUTATION, TO CRISPINUS, THE DONATIST BISHOP OF CALAMA.

1. You ought to have been influenced by the fear of God; but since, in your work of rebaptizing the Mappalians,[2] you have chosen to take advantage of the fear with which as man you could inspire them, let me ask you what hinders the order of the sovereign from being carried out in the province, when the order of the governor of the province has been so fully enforced in a village? If you compare the persons concerned, you are but a vassal in possession; he is the Emperor. If you compare the positions of both, you are in a property, he is on a throne; if you compare the causes maintained by both, his aim is to heal division, and yours is to rend unity in twain. But we do not bid you stand in awe of man: though we might take steps to compel you to pay, according to the imperial decree, ten pounds of gold as the penalty of your outrage. Perhaps you might be unable to pay the fine imposed upon those who rebaptize members of the Church, having been involved in so much expense in buying

[1] Held at Carthage, A.D. 318 or 319, Can. 11.

[2] About eighty persons, on a property which he had acquired, were compelled by Crispinus to undergo submersion, notwithstanding their groaning and protesting against this tyrannical act of their new landlord.

people whom you might compel to submit to the rite. But, as I have said, we do not bid you be afraid of man: rather let Christ fill you with fear. I should like to know what answer you could give Him, if He said to you: "Crispinus, was it a great price which you paid in order to buy the fear of the Mappalian peasantry; and does My death, the price paid by Me to purchase the love of all nations, seem little in your eyes? Was the money which was counted out from your purse in acquiring these serfs in order to their being rebaptized, a more costly sacrifice than the blood which flowed from My side in redeeming the nations in order to their being baptized?" I know that, if you would listen to Christ, you might hear many more such appeals, and might, even by the possession which you have obtained, be warned how impious are the things which you have spoken against Christ. For if you think that your title to hold what you have bought with money is sure by human law, how much more sure, by divine law, is Christ's title to that which He hath bought with His own blood! And it is true that He of whom it is written, "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth," shall hold with invincible might all which He has purchased; but how can you expect with any assurance to retain that which you think you have made your own by purchase in Africa, when you affirm that Christ has lost the whole world, and been left with Africa alone as His portion?

2. But why multiply words? If these Mappalians have passed of their own free will into your communion, let them hear both you and me on the question which divides us,—the words of each of us being written down, and translated into the Punic tongue after having been attested by our signatures; and then, all pressure through fear of their superior being removed, let these vassals choose what they please. For by the things which we shall say it will be made manifest whether they remain in error under coercion, or hold what they believe to be truth with their own consent. They either understand these matters, or they do not: if they do not, how could you dare to transfer them in their ignorance to your communion? and if they do, let them, as I have said, hear

both sides, and act freely for themselves. If there be any communities that have passed over from you to us, which you believe to have yielded to the pressure of their superiors, let the same be done in their case; let them hear both sides, and choose for themselves. Now, if you reject this proposal, who can fail to be convinced that your reliance is not upon the force of truth? But you ought to beware of the wrath of God both here and hereafter. I adjure you by Christ to give a reply to what I have written.

LETTER LXVII.

(A.D. 402.)

TO MY LORD MOST BELOVED AND LONGED FOR, MY HONOURED BROTHER IN CHRIST, AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER, JEROME, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

CHAP. I. 1. I have heard that my letter has come to your hand. I have not yet received a reply, but I do not on this account question your affection; doubtless something has hitherto prevented you. Wherefore I know and avow that my prayer should be, that God would put it in your power to forward your reply, for He has already given you power to prepare it, seeing that you can do so with the utmost ease if you feel disposed.

CHAP. II. 2. I have hesitated whether to give credence or not to a certain report which has reached me; but I felt that I ought not to hesitate as to writing a few lines to you regarding the matter. To be brief, I have heard that some brethren have told your Charity that I have written a book against you and have sent it to Rome. Be assured that this is false: I call God to witness that I have not done this. But if perchance there be some things in some of my writings in which I am found to have been of a different opinion from you, I think you ought to know, or if it cannot be certainly known, at least to believe, that such things have been written not with a view of contradicting you, but only of stating my own views. In saying this, however, let me assure you that not only am I most ready to hear in a brotherly spirit the objections which you may entertain to anything in my writings

which has displeased you, but I entreat, nay implore you, to acquaint me with them; and thus I shall be made glad either by the correction of my mistake, or at least by the expression of your goodwill.

3. Oh that it were in my power, by our living near each other, if not under the same roof, to enjoy frequent and sweet conference with you in the Lord! Since, however, this is not granted, I beg you to take pains that this one way in which we can be together in the Lord be kept up; nay, more improved and perfected. Do not refuse to write me in return, however seldom.

Greet with my respects our holy brother Paulinianus, and all the brethren who with you, and because of you, rejoice in the Lord. May you, remembering us, be heard by the Lord in regard to all your holy desires, my lord most beloved and longed for, my honoured brother in Christ.

LETTER LXVIII.

(A.D. 402.)

TO AUGUSTINE, MY LORD, TRULY HOLY AND MOST BLESSED FATHER,[1] JEROME SENDS GREETING IN CHRIST.

1. When my kinsman, our holy son Asterius, subdeacon, was just on the point of beginning his journey, the letter of your Grace arrived, in which you clear yourself of the charge of having sent to Rome a book written against your humble servant.[2] I had not heard that charge; but by our brother Sysinnius, deacon, copies of a letter addressed by some one apparently to me have come hither. In the said letter I am exhorted to sing the παλινωδία, confessing mistake in regard to a paragraph of the apostle's writing, and to imitate Stesichorus, who, vacillating between disparagement and praises of Helen, recovered, by praising her, the eyesight which he had forfeited by speaking against her.[3] Although the style and the method of argument appeared to be yours, I must frankly confess to your Excellency that I did not think it right to assume without examination the authenticity of a letter of

[1] Papæ. [2] Parvitas mea. [3] See Letter XL. sec. 7, page 134.

which I had only seen copies, lest perchance, if offended by my reply, you should with justice complain that it was my duty first to have made sure that you were the author, and only after that was ascertained, to address you in reply. Another reason for my delay was the protracted illness of the pious and venerable Paula. For, while occupied long in attending upon her in severe illness, I had almost forgotten your letter, or more correctly, the letter written in your name, remembering the verse, "Like music in the day of mourning is an unseasonable discourse."[1] Therefore, if it is your letter, write me frankly that it is so, or send me a more accurate copy, in order that without any passionate rancour we may devote ourselves to discuss scriptural truth; and I may either correct my own mistake, or show that another has without good reason found fault with me.

2. Far be it from me to presume to attack anything which your Grace has written. For it is enough for me to prove my own views without controverting what others hold. But it is well known to one of your wisdom, that every one is satisfied with his own opinion, and that it is puerile self-sufficiency to seek, as young men have of old been wont to do, to gain glory to one's own name by assailing men who have become renowned. I am not so foolish as to think myself insulted by the fact that you give an explanation different from *mine*; since you, on the other hand, are not wronged by my views being contrary to those which you maintain. But that is the kind of reproof by which friends may truly benefit each other, when each, not seeing his own bag of faults, observes, as Persius has it, the wallet borne by the other.[2] Let me say further, love one who loves you, and do not because you are young challenge a veteran in the field of Scripture. I have had my time, and have run my course to the utmost of my strength. It is but fair that I should rest, while you in your turn run and accomplish great distances; at the same time (with your leave, and without intending any

[1] Ecclus. xxii. 6.

[2] "Ut nemo in sese tentat descendere, nemo;
Sed præcedenti spectatur mantica tergo."—*Sat.* iv. 29. See also *Phædrus*, iv. 10.

disrespect), lest it should seem that to quote from the poets is a thing which you alone can do, let me remind you of the encounter between Dares and Entellus,[1] and of the proverb, "The tired ox treads with a firmer step." With sorrow I have dictated these words. Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning!

3. With his usual effrontery, Calphurnius, surnamed Lanarius,[2] has sent me his execrable writings, which I understand that he has been at pains to disseminate in Africa also. To these I have replied in part, and shortly; and I have sent you a copy of my treatise, intending by the first opportunity to send you a larger work, when I have leisure to prepare it. In this treatise I have been careful not to offend Christian feeling in any, but only to confute the lies and hallucinations arising from his ignorance and madness.

Remember me, holy and venerable father. See how sincerely I love thee, in that I am unwilling, even when challenged, to reply, and refuse to believe you to be the author of that which in another I would sharply rebuke. Our brother Communis sends his respectful salutation.

LETTER LXIX.

(A.D. 402.)

TO THEIR JUSTLY BELOVED LORD CASTORIUS, THEIR TRULY WELCOMED AND WORTHILY HONOURED SON, ALYPIUS AND AUGUSTINE SEND GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. AN attempt was made by the enemy of Christians to cause, by occasion of our very dear and sweet son your brother, the agitation of a most dangerous scandal within the Catholic Church, which as a mother welcomed you to her affectionate embrace when you fled from a disinherited and separated fragment into the heritage of Christ; the desire of that enemy being evidently to becloud with unseemly melancholy the calm beauty of joy which was imparted to us by the blessing of your conversion. But the Lord our God, who is

[1] Virgil, *Æneid*, v. 369 seq.

[2] Rufinus.

compassionate and merciful, who comforteth them that are cast down, nourishing the infants, and cherishing the infirm, permitted him to gain in some measure success in this design, only to make us rejoice more over the prevention of the calamity than we grieved over the danger. For it is a far more magnanimous thing to have resigned the onerous responsibilities of the bishop's dignity in order to save the Church from danger, than to have accepted these in order to have a share in her government. He truly proves that he was worthy of holding that office, had the interests of peace permitted him to do so, who does not insist upon retaining it when he cannot do so without endangering the peace of the Church: It has accordingly pleased God to show, by means of your brother, our beloved son Maximianus, unto the enemies of His Church, that there are within her those who seek not their own things, but the things of Jesus Christ. For in laying down that ministry of stewardship of the mysteries of God, he was not deserting his duty under the pressure of some worldly desire, but acting under the impulse of a pious love of peace, lest, on account of the honour conferred upon him, there should arise among the members of Christ an unseemly and dangerous, perhaps even fatal, dissension. For could anything have been more infatuated and worthy of utter reprobation, than to forsake schismatics because of the peace of the Catholic Church, and then to trouble that same Catholic peace by the question of one's own rank and preferment? On the other hand, could anything be more praiseworthy, and more in accordance with Christian charity, than that, after having forsaken the frenzied pride of the Donatists, he should, in the manner of his cleaving to the heritage of Christ, give such a signal proof of humility under the power of love for the unity of the Church? As for him, therefore, we rejoice indeed that he has been proved of such stability that the storm of this temptation has not cast down what divine truth had built in his heart; and therefore we desire and pray the Lord to grant that, by his life and conversation in the future, he may make it more and more manifest how well he would have discharged the responsibilities of that office which he would have accepted if that had been his

duty. May that eternal peace which is promised to the Church be given in recompense to him, who discerned that the things which were not compatible with the peace of the Church were not expedient for him!

2. As for you, our dear son, in whom we have great joy, since you are not restrained from accepting the office of bishop by any such considerations as have guided your brother in declining it, it becomes one of your disposition to devote to Christ that which is in you by His own gift. Your talents, prudence, eloquence, gravity, self-control, and everything else which adorns your conversation, are the gifts of God. To what service can they be more fittingly devoted than to His by whom they were bestowed, in order that they may be preserved, increased, perfected, and rewarded by Him? Let them not be devoted to the service of this world, lest with it they pass away and perish. We know that, in dealing with you, it is not necessary to insist much on your reflecting, as you may so easily do, upon the hopes of vain men, their insatiable desires, and the uncertainty of life. Away, therefore, with every expectation of deceptive and earthly felicity which your mind had grasped: labour in the vineyard of God, where the fruit is sure, where so many promises have already received so large measure of fulfilment, that it would be the height of madness to despair as to those which remain. We beseech you by the divinity and humanity of Christ, and by the peace of that heavenly city where we receive eternal rest after labouring for the time of our pilgrimage, to take the place as the bishop of the Church of Vagina which your brother has resigned, not under ignominious deposition, but by magnanimous concession. Let that people for whom we expect the richest increase of blessings through your mind and tongue, endowed and adorned by the gifts of God,—let that people, we say, perceive through you, that in what your brother has done, he was consulting not his own indolence, but their peace.

We have given orders that this letter be not read to you until those to whom you are necessary hold you in actual possession.[1] For we hold you in the bond of spiritual love,

[1] It would seem that there was some reason to fear lest Castorius should elsewhere devote his talents to some other calling, and that a deputation from Vagina

because to us also you are very necessary as a colleague. Our reason for not coming in person to you, you shall afterwards learn.

LETTER LXX.

(A.D. 402.)

This letter is addressed by Alypius and Augustine to Naucelio, a person through whom they had discussed the question of the Donatist schism with Clarentius, an aged Donatist bishop (probably the same with the Numidian bishop of Tabraca, who took part in the Conference at Carthage in 411 A.D.). The ground traversed in the letter is the same as in pages 186 to 191, in Letter LI., regarding the inconsistencies of the Donatists in the case of Felicianus of Musti. We therefore leave it untranslated.

LETTER LXXI.

(A.D. 403.)

TO MY VENERABLE LORD JEROME, MY ESTEEMED AND HOLY BROTHER AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

CHAP. I. 1. Never since I began to write to you, and to long for your writing in return, have I met with a better opportunity for our exchanging communications than now, when my letter is to be carried to you by a most faithful servant and minister of God, who is also a very dear friend of mine, namely, our son Cyprian, deacon. Through him I expect to receive a letter from you with all the certainty which is in a matter of this kind possible. For the son whom I have named will not be found wanting in respect of zeal in asking, or persuasive influence in obtaining a reply from you; nor will he fail in diligently keeping, promptly bearing, and faithfully delivering the same. I only pray that if I be in any way worthy of this, the Lord may give His help and favour to your heart and to my desire, so that no higher will may hinder that which your brotherly goodwill inclines you to do.

had been sent to seek him and bring him to that place. Alypius and Augustine for some reason did not accompany the deputation, but sent this letter with them.

2. As I have sent you two letters already to which I have received no reply, I have resolved to send you at this time copies of both of them, for I suppose that they never reached you. If they did reach you, and your replies have failed, as may be the case, to reach me, send me a second time the same as you sent before, if you have copies of them preserved: if you have not, dictate again what I may read, and do not refuse to send to these former letters the answer for which I have been waiting so long. My first letter to you, which I had prepared while I was a presbyter, was to be delivered to you by a brother of ours, Profuturus, who afterwards became my colleague in the episcopate, and has since then departed from this life; but he could not then bear it to you in person, because at the very time when he intended to begin his journey, he was prevented by his ordination to the weighty office of bishop, and shortly afterwards he died. This letter I have resolved also to send at this time, that you may know how long I have cherished a burning desire for conversation with you, and with what reluctance I submit to the remote separation which prevents my mind from having access to yours through our bodily senses, my brother, most amiable and honoured among the members of the Lord.

CHAP. II. 3. In this letter I have further to say, that I have since heard that you have translated Job out of the original Hebrew, although in your own translation of the same prophet from the Greek tongue we had already a version of that book. In that earlier version you marked with asterisks the words found in the Hebrew but wanting in the Greek, and with obelisks the words found in the Greek but wanting in the Hebrew; and this was done with such astonishing exactness, that in some places we have every word distinguished by a separate asterisk, as a sign that these words are in the Hebrew, but not in the Greek. Now, however, in this more recent version from the Hebrew, there is not the same scrupulous fidelity as to the words; and it perplexes any thoughtful reader to understand either what was the reason for marking the asterisks in the former version with so much care that they indicate the absence from the Greek version of even the smallest grammatical particles which have not been rendered from the Hebrew, or

what is the reason for so much less care having been taken in this recent version from the Hebrew to secure that these same particles be found in their own places. I would have put down here an extract or two in illustration of this criticism; but at present I have not access to the MS. of the translation from the Hebrew. Since, however, your quick discernment anticipates and goes beyond not only what I have said, but also what I meant to say, you already understand, I think, enough to be able, by giving the reason for the plan which you have adopted, to explain what perplexes me.

4. For my part, I would much rather that you would furnish us with a translation of the Greek version of the canonical Scriptures known as the work of the Seventy translators. For if your translation begins to be more generally read in many churches, it will be a grievous thing that, in the reading of Scripture, differences must arise between the Latin Churches and the Greek Churches, especially seeing that the discrepancy is easily condemned in a Latin version by the production of the original in Greek, which is a language very widely known; whereas, if any one has been disturbed by the occurrence of something to which he was not accustomed in the translation taken from the Hebrew, and alleges that the new translation is wrong, it will be found difficult, if not impossible, to get at the Hebrew documents by which the version to which exception is taken may be defended. And when they are obtained, who will submit to have so many Latin and Greek authorities pronounced to be in the wrong? Besides all this, Jews, if consulted as to the meaning of the Hebrew text, may give a different opinion from yours: in which case it will seem as if your presence were indispensable, as being the only one who could refute their view; and it would be a miracle if one could be found capable of acting as arbiter between you and them.

CHAP. III. 5. A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so many

generations in the church.[1] Thereupon arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew MSS. were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a congregation,—a calamity which he narrowly escaped. From this case we also are led to think that you may be occasionally mistaken. You will also observe how great must have been the difficulty if this had occurred in those writings which cannot be explained by comparing the testimony of languages now in use.

CHAP. IV. 6. At the same time, we are in no small measure thankful to God for the work in which you have translated the Gospels from the original Greek, because in almost every passage we have found nothing to object to, when we compared it with the Greek Scriptures. By this work, any disputant who supports an old false translation is either convinced or confuted with the utmost ease by the production and collation of MSS. And if, as indeed very rarely happens, something be found to which exception may be taken, who would be so unreasonable as not to excuse it readily in a work so useful that it cannot be too highly praised? I wish you would have the kindness to open up to me what you think to be the reason of the frequent discrepancies between the text supported by the Hebrew codices and the Greek Septuagint version. For the latter has no mean authority, seeing that it has obtained so wide circulation, and was the one which the apostles used, as is not only proved by looking to the text itself, but has also been, as I remember, affirmed by yourself. You would therefore confer upon us a much greater boon if you gave an exact Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint version: for the variations found in the different codices of the Latin text are intolerably numerous; and it is so justly open

[1] Jonah iv. 6.

to suspicion as possibly different from what is to be found in the Greek, that one has no confidence in either quoting it or proving anything by its help.

I thought that this letter was to be a short one, but it has somehow been as pleasant to me to go on with it as if I were talking with you. I conclude with entreating you by the Lord kindly to send me a full reply, and thus give me, so far as is in your power, the pleasure of your presence.

LETTER LXXII.

(A.D. 404.)

TO AUGUSTINE, MY LORD TRULY HOLY, AND MOST BLESSED FATHER, JEROME SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

CHAP. I. 1. You are sending me letter upon letter, and often urging me to answer a certain letter of yours, a copy of which, without your signature, had reached me through our brother Sysinnius, deacon, as I have already written, which letter you tell me that you entrusted first to our brother Profuturus, and afterwards to some one else; but that Profuturus was prevented from finishing his intended journey, and having been ordained a bishop, was removed by sudden death; and the second messenger, whose name you do not give, was afraid of the perils of the sea, and gave up the voyage which he had intended. These things being so, I am at a loss to express my surprise that the same letter is reported to be in the possession of most of the Christians in Rome, and throughout Italy, and has come to every one but myself, to whom alone it was ostensibly sent. I wonder at this all the more, because the brother Sysinnius aforesaid tells me that he found it among the rest of your published works, not in Africa, not in your possession, but in an island of the Adriatic some five years ago.

2. True friendship can harbour no suspicion; a friend must speak to his friend as freely as to his second self. Some of my acquaintances, vessels of Christ, of whom there is a very large number in Jerusalem and in the holy places, suggested to me that this had not been done by you in a guileless spirit, but through desire for praise and celebrity, and *éclat* in the

eyes of the people, intending to become famous at my expense; that many might know that you challenged me, and I feared to meet you; that you had written as a man of learning, and I had by silence confessed my ignorance, and had at last found one who knew how to stop my garrulous tongue. I, however, let me say it frankly, refused at first to answer your Excellency, because I did not believe that the letter, or as I may call it (using a proverbial expression), the honeyed sword, was sent from you. Moreover, I was cautious lest I should seem to answer uncourteously a bishop of my own communion, and to censure anything in the letter of one who censured me, especially as I judged some of its statements to be tainted with heresy.[1] Lastly, I was afraid lest you should have reason to remonstrate with me, saying, "What! had you seen the letter to be mine,—had you discovered in the signature attached to it the autograph of a hand well known to you, when you so carelessly wounded the feelings of your friend, and reproached me with that which the malice of another had conceived?"

CHAP. II. 3. Wherefore, as I have already written, either send me the identical letter in question subscribed with your own hand, or desist from annoying an old man, who seeks retirement in his monastic cell. If you wish to exercise or display your learning, choose as your antagonists, young, eloquent, and illustrious men, of whom it is said that many are found in Rome, who may be neither unable nor afraid to meet you, and to enter the lists with a bishop in debates concerning the Sacred Scriptures. As for me, a soldier once, but a retired veteran now, it becomes me rather to applaud the victories won by you and others, than with my worn-out body to take part in the conflict; beware lest, if you persist in demanding a reply, I call to mind the history of the way in which Quintus Maximus by his patience defeated Hannibal, who was, in the pride of youth, confident of success.[2]

"Omnia fert ætas, animum quoque. Sæpe ego longos
Cantando puerum memini me condere soles:

[1] I have taken the liberty of making chap. ii. begin at the end instead of the beginning of this sentence, where its interruption of the paragraph bewilders the reader.

[2] Livy, book xxii.

Nunc oblita mihi tot carmina: vox quoque Mœrin
Jam fugit ipsa." [1]

Or rather, to quote an instance from Scripture: Barzillai of Gilead, when he declined in favour of his youthful son the kindnesses of King David and all the charms of his court, taught us that old age ought neither to desire these things, nor to accept them when offered.

4. As to your calling God to witness that you had not written a book against me, and of course had not sent to Rome what you had never written, adding that, if perchance some things were found in your works in which a different opinion from mine was advanced, no wrong had thereby been done to me, because you had, without any intention of offending me, written only what you believed to be right; I beg you to hear me with patience. You never wrote a book against me: how then has there been brought to me a copy, written by another hand, of a treatise containing a rebuke administered to me by you? How comes Italy to possess a treatise of yours which you did not write? Nay, how can you reasonably ask me to reply to that which you solemnly assure me was never written by you? Nor am I so foolish as to think that I am insulted by you, if in anything your opinion differs from mine. But if, challenging me as it were to single combat, you take exception to my views, and demand a reason for what I have written, and insist upon my correcting what you judge to be an error, and call upon me to recant it in a humble παλινῳδία, and speak of your curing me of blindness; in this I maintain that friendship is wounded, and the laws of brotherly union are set at nought. Let not the world see us quarrelling like children, and giving material for angry contention between those who may become our respective supporters or adversaries. I write what I have now written, because I desire to cherish towards you pure and Christian love, and not to hide in my heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of my lips. For it does not become me, who have spent my life from youth until now, sharing the arduous labours of pious brethren in an obscure monastery, to presume to write anything against a bishop of my own communion, especially

[1] Virgil, *Eclogue* ix.

against one whom I had begun to love before I knew him, who also sought my friendship before I sought his, and whom I rejoiced to see rising as a successor to myself in the careful study of the Scriptures. Wherefore either disown that book, if you are not its author, and give over urging me to reply to that which you never wrote; or if the book is yours, admit it frankly; so that if I write anything in self-defence, the responsibility may lie on you who gave, not on me who am forced to accept, the challenge.

CHAP. III. 5. You say also, that if there be anything in your writings which has displeased me, and which I would wish to correct, you are ready to receive my criticism as a brother; and you not only assure me that you would rejoice in such proof of my goodwill toward you, but you earnestly ask me to do this. I tell you again, without reserve, what I feel: you are challenging an old man, disturbing the peace of one who asks only to be allowed to be silent, and you seem to desire to display your learning. It is not for one of my years to give the impression of enviously disparaging one whom I ought rather to encourage by approbation. And if the ingenuity of perverse men finds something which they may plausibly censure in the writings even of evangelists and prophets, are you amazed if, in your books, especially in your exposition of passages in Scripture which are exceedingly difficult of interpretation, some things be found which are not perfectly correct? This I say, however, not because I can at this time pronounce anything in your works to merit censure. For, in the first place, I have never read them with attention; and in the second place, we have not beside us a supply of copies of what you have written, excepting the books of Soliloquies and Commentaries on some of the Psalms; which, if I were disposed to criticise them, I could prove to be at variance, I shall not say with my own opinion, for I am nobody, but with the interpretations of the older Greek commentators.

Farewell, my very dear friend, my son in years, my father in ecclesiastical dignity; and to this I most particularly request your attention, that henceforth you make sure that I be the first to receive whatever you may write to me.

LETTER LXXIII.

(A.D. 404.)

TO JEROME, MY VENERABLE AND MOST ESTEEMED BROTHER AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

CHAP. I. 1. Although I suppose that, before this reaches you, you have received through our son the deacon Cyprian, a servant of God, the letter which I sent by him, from which you would be apprised with certainty that I wrote the letter of which you mentioned that a copy had been brought to you; in consequence of which I suppose that I have begun already, like the rash Dares, to be beaten and belaboured by the missiles and the merciless fists of a second Entellus[1] in the reply which you have written; nevertheless I answer in the meantime the letter which you have deigned to send me by our holy son Asterius, in which I have found many proofs of your most kind goodwill to me, and at the same time some signs of your having in some measure felt aggrieved by me. In reading it, therefore, I was no sooner soothed by one sentence than I was buffeted in another; my wonder being especially called forth by this, that after alleging, as your reason for not rashly accepting as authentic the letter from me of which you had a copy, the fact that, offended by your reply, I might justly remonstrate with you, because you ought first to have ascertained that it was mine before answering it, you go on to command me to acknowledge the letter frankly if it is mine, or send a more reliable copy of it, in order that we may, without any bitterness of feeling, address ourselves to the discussion of scriptural doctrine. For how can we engage in such discussion without bitterness of feeling, if you have made up your mind to offend me? or, if your mind is not made up to this, what reason could I have had, when you did not offend me, for justly complaining as having been offended by you, that you ought first to have made sure that the letter was mine, and only then to have replied, that is to say, only then to have offended me? For if there had been nothing to offend me in your reply, I could have had no just ground of

[1] See Jerome's Letter, LXVIII., sec. 2, p. 257.

complaint. Accordingly, when you write such a reply to that letter as must offend me, what hope is left of our engaging without any bitterness in the discussion of scriptural doctrine? Far be it from me to take offence if you are willing and able to prove, by incontrovertible argument, that you have apprehended more correctly than I have the meaning of that passage in Paul's Epistle [to the Galatians], or of any other text in Holy Scripture: nay, more, far be it from me to count it aught else than gain to myself, and cause of thankfulness to you, if in anything I am either informed by your teaching or set right by your correction.

2. But, my very dear brother, you could not think that I could be offended by your reply, had you not thought that you were offended by what I had written. For I could never have entertained concerning you the idea that you had not felt yourself offended by me if you so framed your reply as to offend me in return. If, on the other hand, I have been supposed by you to be capable of such preposterous folly as to take offence when you had not written in such a way as to give me occasion, you have in this already wronged me, that you have entertained such an opinion of me. But surely you who are so cautious, that although you recognised my style in the letter of which you had a copy, you refused to believe its authenticity, would not without consideration believe me to be so different from what your experience has proved me to be. For if you had good reason for seeing that I might justly complain had you hastily concluded that a letter not written by me was mine, how much more reasonably may I complain if you form, without consideration, such an estimate of myself as is contradicted by your own experience! You would not therefore go so far astray in your judgment as to believe, when you had written nothing by which I could be offended, that I would nevertheless be so foolish as to be capable of being offended by such a reply.

CHAP. II. 3. There can therefore be no doubt that you were prepared to reply in such a way as would offend me, if you had only indisputable evidence that the letter was mine. Accordingly, since I do not believe that you would think it right to offend me unless you had just cause, it remains for me to confess, as I now do, my fault as having been the first

to offend by writing that letter which I cannot deny to be mine. Why should I strive to swim against the current, and not rather ask pardon? I therefore entreat you by the mercy of Christ to forgive me wherein I have injured you, and not to render evil for evil by injuring me in return. For it will be an injury to me if you pass over in silence anything which you find wrong in either word or action of mine. If, indeed, you rebuke in me that which merits no rebuke, you do wrong to yourself, not to me; for far be it from one of your life and holy vows to rebuke merely from a desire to give offence, using the tongue of malice to condemn in me that which by the truth-revealing light of reason you know to deserve no blame. Therefore either rebuke kindly him whom, though he is free from fault, you think to merit rebuke; or with a father's kindness soothe him whom you cannot bring to agree with you. For it is possible that your opinion may be at variance with the truth, while notwithstanding your actions are in harmony with Christian charity: for I also shall most thankfully receive your rebuke as a most friendly action, even though the thing censured be capable of defence, and therefore ought not to have been censured; or else I shall acknowledge both your kindness and my fault, and shall be found, so far as the Lord enables me, grateful for the one, and corrected in regarded to the other.

4. Why, then, shall I fear your words, hard, perhaps, like the boxing-gloves of Entellus, but certainly fitted to do me good? The blows of Entellus were intended not to heal, but to harm, and therefore his antagonist was conquered, not cured. But I, if I receive your correction calmly as a necessary medicine, shall not be pained by it. If, however, through weakness, either common to human nature or peculiar to myself, I cannot help feeling some pain from rebuke, even when I am justly reproved, it is far better to have a tumour in one's head cured, though the lance cause pain, than to escape the pain by letting the disease go on. This was clearly seen by him who said that, for the most part, our enemies who expose our faults are more useful than friends who are afraid to reprove us. For the former, in their angry recriminations, sometimes charge us with what we indeed require to correct;

but the latter, through fear of destroying the sweetness of friendship, show less boldness on behalf of right than they ought. Since, therefore, you are, to quote your own comparison, an ox[1] worn out, perhaps, as to your bodily strength by reason of years, but unimpaired in mental vigour, and toiling still assiduously and with profit in the Lord's threshing-floor; here am I, and in whatever I have spoken amiss, tread firmly on me: the weight of your venerable age should not be grievous to me, if the chaff of my fault be so bruised under foot as to be separated from me.

5. Let me further say, that it is with the utmost affectionate yearning that I read or recollect the words at the end of your letter, "Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning." For my part, I say,—Would that we were even dwelling in parts of the earth less widely separated; so that if we could not meet for converse, we might at least have a more frequent exchange of letters. For as it is, so great is the distance by which we are prevented from any kind of access to each other through the eye and ear, that I remember writing to your Holiness regarding these words in the Epistle to the Galatians when I was young; and behold I am now advanced in age, and have not yet received a reply, and a copy of my letter has reached you by some strange accident earlier than the letter itself, about the transmission of which I took no small pains. For the man to whom I entrusted it neither delivered it to you nor returned it to me. So great in my esteem is the value of those of your writings which we have been able to procure, that I should prefer to all other studies the privilege, if it were attainable by me, of sitting by your side and learning from you. Since I cannot do this myself, I propose to send to you one of my sons in the Lord, that he may for my benefit be instructed by you, in the event of my receiving from you a favourable reply in regard to the matter. For I have not now, and I can never hope to have, such knowledge of the Divine Scriptures as I see you possess. Whatever abilities I may have for such study, I devote entirely to the instruction of the people whom God has entrusted to me; and I am wholly

[1] See p. 257.

precluded by my ecclesiastical occupations from having leisure for any further prosecution of my studies than is necessary for my duty in public teaching.

CHAP. III. 6. I am not acquainted with the writings speaking injuriously of you, which you tell me have come into Africa. I have, however, received the reply to these which you have been pleased to send. After reading it, let me say frankly, I have been exceedingly grieved that the mischief of such painful discord has arisen between persons once so loving and intimate, and formerly united by the bond of a friendship which was well known in almost all the Churches. In that treatise of yours, any one may see how you are keeping yourself under restraint, and holding back the stinging keenness of your indignation, lest you should render railing for railing. If, however, even in reading this reply of yours, I fainted with grief and shuddered with fear, what would be the effect produced in me by the things which he has written against you, if they should come into my possession! "Woe unto the world because of offences!"[1] Behold the complete fulfilment of that which He who is Truth foretold: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."[2] For what trusting hearts can now pour themselves forth with any assurance of their confidence being reciprocated? Into whose breast may confiding love now throw itself without reserve? In short, where is the friend who may not be feared as possibly a future enemy, if the breach that we deplore could arise between Jerome and Rufinus? Oh, sad and pitiable is our portion! Who can rely upon the affection of his friends because of what he knows them to be now, when he has no foreknowledge of what they shall afterwards become? But why should I reckon it cause for sorrow, that one man is thus ignorant of what another may become, when no man knows even what he himself is afterwards to be? The utmost that he knows, and that he knows but imperfectly, is his present condition; of what he shall hereafter become he has no knowledge.

7. Do the holy and blessed angels possess not only this knowledge of their actual character, but also a foreknowledge of what they shall afterwards become? If they do, I cannot

[1] Matt. xviii. 7. [2] Matt. xxiv. 12.

see how it was possible for Satan ever to have been happy, even while he was still a good angel, knowing, as in this case he must have known, his future transgression and eternal punishment. I would wish to hear what you think as to this question, if indeed it be one which it would be profitable for us to be able to answer. But mark here what I suffer from the lands and seas which keep us, so far as the body is concerned, distant from each other. If I were myself the letter which you are now reading, you might have told me already what I have just asked; but now, when will you write me a reply? when will you get it sent away? when will it come here? when shall I receive it? And yet, would that I were sure it would come at last, though meanwhile I must summon all the patience which I can command to endure the unwelcome but unavoidable delay! Wherefore I come back to those most delightful words of your letter, filled with your holy longing, and I in turn appropriate them as my own: "Would that I might receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning,"—if indeed there be any sense in which I could possibly impart instruction to you.

8. When by these words, now mine not less than yours, I am gladdened and refreshed, and when I am comforted not a little by the fact that in both of us a desire for mutual fellowship exists, though meanwhile unsatisfied, it is not long before I am pierced through by darts of keenest sorrow when I consider Rufinus and you, to whom God had granted in fullest measure and for a length of time that which both of us have longed for, so that in most close and endearing fellowship you feasted together on the honey of the Holy Scriptures, and think how between you the blight of such exceeding bitterness has found its way, constraining us to ask when, where, and in whom the same calamity may not be reasonably feared; seeing that it has befallen you at the very time when, unencumbered, having cast away secular burdens, you were following the Lord and were living together in that very land which was trodden by the feet of our Lord, when He said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you;"[1] being, moreover, men of mature age, whose life was devoted to the study of the word of God.

[1] John xiv. 27.

Truly "man's life on earth is a period of trial."[1] If I could anywhere meet you both together—which, alas, I cannot hope to do—so strong are my agitation, grief, and fear, that I think I would cast myself at your feet, and there weeping till I could weep no more, would, with all the eloquence of love, appeal first to each of you for his own sake, then to both for each other's sake, and for the sake of those, especially the weak, "for whom Christ died,"[2] whose salvation is in peril, as they look on you who occupy a place so conspicuous on the stage of time; imploring you not to write and scatter abroad these hard words against each other, which, if at any time you who are now at variance were reconciled, you could not destroy, and which you could not then venture to read lest strife should be kindled anew.

9. But I say to your Charity, that nothing has made me tremble more than your estrangement from Rufinus, when I read in your letter some of the indications of your being displeased with me. I refer not so much to what you say of Entellus and of the wearied ox, in which you appear to me to use genial pleasantry rather than angry threat, but to that which you have evidently written in earnest, of which I have already spoken perhaps more than was fitting, but not more than my fears compelled me to do,—namely, the words, "lest perchance, being offended, you should have reason to remonstrate with me." If it be possible for us to examine and discuss anything by which our hearts may be nourished, without any bitterness of discord, I entreat you let us address ourselves to this. But if it is not possible for either of us to point out what he may judge to demand correction in the other's writings, without being suspected of envy and regarded as wounding friendship, let us, having regard to our spiritual life and health, leave such conference alone. Let us content ourselves with smaller attainments in that [knowledge] which puffeth up, if we can thereby preserve unharmed that [charity] which edifieth.[3] I feel that I come far short of that perfection of which it is written, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man;"[4] but through God's mercy I truly

[1] Job vii. 1, according to the LXX., and more correctly than in E. V.
[2] 1 Cor. viii. 11. [3] 1 Cor. viii. 1. [4] Jas. iii. 2.

believe myself able to ask your forgiveness for that in which I have offended you: and this you ought to make plain to me, that through my hearing you, you may gain your brother.[1] Nor should you make it a reason for leaving me in error, that the distance between us on the earth's surface makes it impossible for us to meet face to face. As concerns the subjects into which we inquire, if I know, or believe, or think that I have got hold of the truth in a matter in which your opinion is different from mine, I shall by all means endeavour, as the Lord may enable me, to maintain my view without injuring you. And as to any offence which I may give to you, so soon as I perceive your displeasure, I shall unreservedly beg your forgiveness.

10. I think, moreover, that your reason for being displeased with me can only be, that I have either said what I ought not, or have not expressed myself in the manner in which I ought: for I do not wonder that we are less thoroughly known to each other than we are to our most close and intimate friends. Upon the love of such friends I readily cast myself without reservation, especially when chafed and wearied by the scandals of this world; and in their love I rest without any disturbing care: for I perceive that God is there, on whom I confidingly cast myself, and in whom I confidingly rest. Nor in this confidence am I disturbed by any fear of that uncertainty as to the morrow which must be present when we lean upon human weakness, and which I have in a former paragraph bewailed. For when I perceive that a man is burning with Christian love, and feel that thereby he has been made a faithful friend to me, whatever plans or thoughts of mine I entrust to him I regard as entrusted not to the man, but to Him in whom his character makes it evident that he dwells: for "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him;"[2] and if he cease to dwell in love, his forsaking it cannot but cause as much pain as his abiding in it caused joy. Nevertheless, in such a case, when one who was an intimate friend has become an enemy, it is better that he should search out what ingenuity may help him to fabricate to our prejudice, than that he should find what anger may

[1] Matt. xviii. 15. [2] 1 John iv. 16.

provoke him to reveal. This every one most easily secures, not by concealing what he does, but by doing nothing which he would wish to conceal. And this the mercy of God grants to good and pious men: they go out and in among their friends in liberty and without fear, whatever these friends may afterwards become: the sins which may have been committed by others within their knowledge they do not reveal, and they themselves avoid doing what they would fear to see revealed. For when any false charge is fabricated by a slanderer, either it is disbelieved, or, if it is believed, our reputation alone is injured, our spiritual wellbeing is not affected. But when any sinful action is committed, that action becomes a secret enemy, even though it be not revealed by the thoughtless or malicious talk of one acquainted with our secrets. Wherefore any person of discernment may see in your own example how, by the comfort of a good conscience, you bear what would otherwise be insupportable—the incredible enmity of one who was formerly your most intimate and beloved friend; and how even what he utters against you, even what may to your disadvantage be believed by some, you turn to good account as the armour of righteousness on the left hand, which is not less useful than armour on the right hand[1] in our warfare with the devil. But truly I would rather see him less bitter in his accusations, than see you thus more fully armed by them. This is a great and a lamentable wonder, that you should have passed from such amity to such enmity: it would be a joyful and a much greater event, should you come back from such enmity to the friendship of former days.

LETTER LXXIV.

(A.D. 404.)

TO MY LORD PRÆSIDIUS, MOST BLESSED, MY BROTHER AND PARTNER IN THE PRIESTLY OFFICE, TRULY ESTEEMED, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. I WRITE to remind you of the request which I made to you as a sincere friend when you were here, that you would

[1] 2 Cor. vi. 7.

not refuse to send a letter of mine to our holy brother and fellow-presbyter Jerome; in order, moreover, to let your Charity know in what terms you ought to write to him on my behalf. I have sent a copy of my letter to him, and of his to me, by reading which your pious wisdom may easily see both the moderation of tone which I have been careful to preserve, and the vehemence on his part by which I have been not unreasonably filled with fear. If, however, I have written anything which I ought not to have written, or have expressed myself in an unbecoming way, let it not be to him, but to myself, in brotherly love, that you send your opinion of what I have done, in order that, if I am convinced of my fault by your rebuke, I may ask his forgiveness.

LETTER LXXV.

(A.D. 404.)

Jerome's answer to Letters XXVIII., XL., and LXXI.

TO AUGUSTINE, MY LORD TRULY HOLY, AND MOST BLESSED FATHER, JEROME SENDS GREETING IN CHRIST.

CHAP. I. 1. I have received by Cyprian, deacon, three letters, or rather three little books, at the same time, from your Excellency, containing what you call sundry questions, but what I feel to be animadversions on opinions which I have published, to answer which, if I were disposed to do it, would require a pretty large volume. Nevertheless I shall attempt to reply without exceeding the limits of a moderately long letter, and without causing delay to our brother, now in haste to depart, who only three days before the time fixed for his journey asked earnestly for a letter to take with him, in consequence of which I am compelled to pour out these sentences, such as they are, almost without premeditation, answering you in a rambling effusion, prepared not in the leisure of deliberate composition, but in the hurry of extemporaneous dictation, which usually produces a discourse that is more the offspring of chance than the parent of instruction; just as unexpected attacks throw into confusion even the bravest soldiers, and

they are compelled to take to flight before they can gird on their armour.

2. But our armour is Christ; it is that which the Apostle Paul prescribes when, writing to the Ephesians, he says, "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day;" and again, "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."[1] Armed with these weapons, King David went forth in his day to battle; and taking from the torrent's bed five smooth rounded stones, he proved that, even amidst all the eddying currents of the world, his feelings were free both from roughness and from defilement; drinking of the brook by the way, and therefore lifted up in spirit, he cut off the head of Goliath, using the proud enemy's own sword as the fittest instrument of death,[2] smiting the profane boaster on the forehead and wounding him in the same place in which Uzziah was smitten with leprosy when he presumed to usurp the priestly office;[3] the same also in which shines the glory that makes the saints rejoice in the Lord, saying, "The light of Thy countenance is sealed upon us, O Lord."[4] Let us therefore also say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise: awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early;"[5] that in us may be fulfilled that word, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it;"[6] and, "The Lord shall give the word with great power to them that publish it."[7] I am well assured that your prayer as well as mine is, that in our contendings the victory may remain with the truth. For you seek Christ's glory, not your own: if you are victorious, I also gain a victory if I discover my error. On the other hand, if I win the day, the gain is yours; for "the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents

[1] Eph. vi. 13–17. [2] 1 Sam. xvii. 40–51. [3] 2 Chron. xvi. 19.
[4] Ps. iv. 7, according to the LXX. [5] Ps. lvii. 7, 8.
[6] Ps. lxxxi. 10. [7] Ps. lxviii. 11, in LXX. version.

for the children."[1] We read, moreover, in Chronicles, that the children of Israel went to battle with their minds set upon peace,[2] seeking even amid swords and bloodshed and the prostrate slain a victory not for themselves, but for peace. Let me therefore, if it be the will of Christ, give an answer to all that you have written, and attempt in a short dissertation to solve your numerous questions. I pass by the conciliatory phrases in your courteous salutation: I say nothing of the compliments by which you attempt to take the edge off your censure: let me come at once to the matters in debate.

CHAP. II. 3. You say that you received from some brother a book of mine, in which I have given a list of ecclesiastical writers, both Greek and Latin, but which had no title; and that when you asked the brother aforesaid (I quote your own statement) why the title-page had no inscription, or what was the name by which the book was known, he answered that it was called "Epitaphium," *i.e.* "Obituary Notices:" upon which you display your reasoning powers, by remarking that the name Epitaphium would have been properly given to the book if the reader had found in it an account of the lives and writings of deceased authors, but that inasmuch as mention is made of the works of many who were living when the book was written, and are at this day still living, you wonder why I should have given the book a title so inappropriate. I think that it must be obvious to your own common sense, that you might have discovered the title of that book from its contents, without any other help. For you have read both Greek and Latin biographies of eminent men, and you know that they do not give to works of this kind the title Epitaphium, but simply "Illustrious Men," *e.g.* "Illustrious Generals," or "philosophers, orators, historians, poets," etc., as the case may be. An Epitaphium is a work written concerning the dead; such as I remember having composed long ago after the decease of the presbyter Nepotianus, of blessed memory. The book, therefore, of which you speak ought to be entitled, "Concerning Illustrious Men," or properly, "Concerning Ecclesiastical Writers," although it is said that by many who were not

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 14. [2] 1 Chron. xii. 17, 18.

qualified to make any correction of the title, it has been called "Concerning Authors."

CHAP. III. 4. You ask, in the second place, my reason for saying, in my commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, that Paul could not have rebuked Peter for that which he himself had done,[1] and could not have censured in another the dissimulation of which he was himself confessedly guilty; and you affirm that that rebuke of the apostle was not a manœuvre of pious policy,[2] but real; and you say that I ought not to teach falsehood, but that all things in Scripture are to be received literally as they stand.

To this I answer, in the first place, that your wisdom ought to have suggested the remembrance of the short preface to my commentaries, saying of my own person, "What then? Am I so foolish and bold as to promise that which he could not accomplish? By no means; but I have rather, as it seems to me, with more reserve and hesitation, because feeling the deficiency of my strength, followed the commentaries of Origen in this matter. For that illustrious man wrote five volumes on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, and has occupied the tenth volume of his *Stromata* with a short treatise upon his explanation of the epistle. He also composed several treatises and fragmentary pieces upon it, which, if they even had stood alone, would have sufficed. I pass over my revered instructor Didymus[3] (blind, it is true, but quick-sighted in the discernment of spiritual things), and the bishop of Laodicea,[4] who has recently left the Church, and the early heretic Alexander, as well as Eusebius of Emesa and Theodorus of Heraclea, who have also left some brief disquisitions upon this subject. From these works if I were to extract even a few passages, a work which could not be altogether despised would be produced. Let me therefore frankly say that I have

[1] Gal. ii. 14. [2] Dispensatoria.

[3] "Videntem meum Didymum,"—Didymus of Alexandria, who, at the time when Jerome wrote his book on ecclesiastical writers (A.D. 392), was above ninety-three years of age. He became blind when he was five years old, but by perseverance attained extraordinary learning, and was much esteemed.

[4] The younger Apollinarius, who in 380 was excommunicated for error regarding the Incarnation. His works were valuable, but have been almost all lost, being not transcribed because of his lapsing into heresy.

read all these; and storing up in my mind very many things which they contain, I have dictated to my amanuensis sometimes what was borrowed from other writers, sometimes what was my own, without distinctly remembering the method, or the words, or the opinions which belonged to each. I look now to the Lord in His mercy to grant that my want of skill and experience may not cause the things which others have well spoken to be lost, or to fail of finding among foreign readers the acceptance with which they have met in the language in which they were first written. If, therefore, anything in my explanation has seemed to you to demand correction, it would have been seemly for one of your learning to inquire first whether what I had written was found in the Greek writers to whom I have referred; and if they had not advanced the opinion which you censured, you could then with propriety condemn me for what I gave as my own view, especially seeing that I have in the preface openly acknowledged that I had followed the commentaries of Origen, and had dictated sometimes the view of others, sometimes my own, and have written at the end of the chapter with which you find fault: "If any one be dissatisfied with the interpretation here given, by which it is shown that neither did Peter sin, nor did Paul rebuke presumptuously a greater than himself, he is bound to show how Paul could consistently blame in another what he himself did." By which I have made it manifest that I did not adopt finally and irrevocably that which I had read in these Greek authors, but had propounded what I had read, leaving to the reader's own judgment whether it should be rejected or approved.

5. You, however, in order to avoid doing what I had asked, have devised a new argument against the view proposed; maintaining that the Gentiles who had believed in Christ were free from the burden of the ceremonial law, but that the Jewish converts were under the law, and that Paul, as the teacher of the Gentiles, rightly rebuked those who kept the law; whereas Peter, who was the chief of the "circumcision,"[1] was justly rebuked for commanding the Gentile converts to do that which the converts from among the Jews were alone

[1] Gal. ii. 8.

under obligation to observe. If this is your opinion, or rather since it is your opinion, that all from among the Jews who believe are debtors to do the whole law, you ought, as being a bishop of great fame in the whole world, to publish your doctrine, and labour to persuade all other bishops to agree with you. As for me in my humble cell,[1] along with the monks my fellow-sinners, I do not presume to dogmatize in regard to things of great moment; I only confess frankly that I read the writings of the Fathers,[2] and, complying with universal usage, put down in my commentaries a variety of explanations, that each may adopt from the number given the one which pleases him. This method, I think, you have found in your reading, and have approved in connection with both secular literature and the Divine Scriptures.

6. Moreover, as to this explanation which Origen first advanced,[3] and which all the other commentators after him have adopted, they bring forward, chiefly for the purpose of answering, the blasphemies of Porphyry, who accuses Paul of presumption because he dared to reprove Peter and rebuke him to his face, and by reasoning convict him of having done wrong; that is to say, of being in the very fault which he himself, who blamed another for transgressing, had committed. What shall I say also of John, who has long governed the Church of Constantinople, and holding pontifical rank,[4] who has composed a very large book upon this paragraph, and has followed the opinion of Origen and of the old expositors? If, therefore, you censure me as in the wrong, suffer me, I pray you, to be mistaken in company with such men; and when you perceive that I have so many companions in my error, you will require to produce at least one partisan in defence of your truth. So much on the interpretation of one paragraph of the Epistle to the Galatians.

7. Lest, however, I should seem to rest my answer to your reasoning wholly on the number of witnesses who are on my

[1] Parvo tuguriunculo. [2] Majorum.

[3] In the tenth book of his *Stromata*, where he expounds the Epistle to the Galatians.

[4] This year (404) was the year of Chrysostom's banishment from Constantinople, after being pontiff there for ten years.

side, and to use the names of illustrious men as a means of escaping from the truth, not daring to meet you in argument, I shall briefly bring forward some examples from the Scriptures.

In the Acts of the Apostles, a voice was heard by Peter, saying unto him, "Rise, Peter, slay and eat," when all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and birds of the air, were presented before him; by which saying it is proved that no man is by nature [ceremonially] unclean, but that all men are equally welcome to the gospel of Christ. To which Peter answered, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." And the voice spake unto him again the second time, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." Therefore he went to Cæsarea, and having entered the house of Cornelius, "he opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." Thereafter "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word; and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."[1] "And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." To whom he gave a full explanation of the reasons of his conduct, and concluded with these words: "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."[2] Again, when, long after this, Paul and Barnabas had come to Antioch, and "having gathered the

[1] Acts x. 13–48. [2] Acts xi. 1–18.

Church together, rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles, certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. And when they were come to Jerusalem, there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, with his wonted readiness, "and said, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they. Then all the multitude kept silence;" and to his opinion the Apostle James, and all the elders together, gave consent.[1]

8. These quotations should not be tedious to the reader, but useful both to him and to me, as proving that, even before the Apostle Paul, Peter had come to know that the law was not to be in force after the gospel was given; nay more, that Peter was the prime mover in issuing the decree by which this was affirmed. Moreover, Peter was of so great authority, that Paul has recorded in his epistle: "Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."[2] In the following context, again, he adds: "Then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles;" proving that he had not

[1] Acts xiv. 27, and xv. 1–12. [2] Gal. i. 18.

had confidence in his preaching of the gospel if he had not been confirmed by the consent of Peter and those who were with him. The next words are, "but privately to them that were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." Why did he this privately rather than in public? Lest offence should be given to the faith of those who from among the Jews had believed, since they thought that the law was still in force, and that they ought to join observance of the law with faith in the Lord as their Saviour. Therefore also, when at that time Peter had come to Antioch (although the Acts of the Apostles do not mention this, but we must believe Paul's statement), Paul affirms that he "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For, before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw," he says, "that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"[1] etc. No one can doubt, therefore, that the Apostle Peter was himself the author of that rule with deviation from which he is charged. The cause of that deviation, moreover, is seen to be fear of the Jews. For the Scripture says, that "at first he did eat with the Gentiles, but that when certain had come from James he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision." Now he feared the Jews, to whom he had been appointed apostle, lest by occasion of the Gentiles they should go back from the faith in Christ; imitating the Good Shepherd in his concern lest he should lose the flock committed to him.

9. As I have shown, therefore, that Peter was thoroughly aware of the abrogation of the law of Moses, but was compelled by fear to pretend to observe it, let us now see whether Paul, who accuses another, ever did anything of the same kind himself. We read in the same book: "Paul passed through

[1] Gal. ii. 1, 2, 14.

Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek."[1] O blessed Apostle Paul, who hadst rebuked Peter for dissimulation, because he withdrew himself from the Gentiles through fear of the Jews who came from James, why art thou, notwithstanding thine own doctrine, compelled to circumcise Timothy, the son of a Gentile, nay more, a Gentile himself (for he was not a Jew, having not been circumcised)? Thou wilt answer, "Because of the Jews which are in these quarters?" If, then, thou forgivest thyself the circumcision of a disciple coming from the Gentiles, forgive Peter also, who has precedence above thee, his doing some things of the same kind through fear of the believing Jews. Again, it is written: "Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow."[2] Be it granted that he was compelled through fear of the Jews in the other case to do what he was unwilling to do; wherefore did he let his hair grow in accordance with a vow of his own making, and afterwards, when in Cenchrea, shave his head according to the law, as the Nazarites, who had given themselves by vow to God, were wont to do, according to the law of Moses?

10. But these things are small when compared with what follows. The sacred historian Luke further relates: "And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly;" and the day following, James, and all the elders who were with him, having expressed their approbation of his gospel, said to Paul: "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake

[1] Acts xv. 41, xvi. 1–3. [2] Acts xviii. 18.

Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until an offering should be offered for every one of them."[1] O Paul, here again let me question thee: Why didst thou shave thy head, why didst thou walk barefoot according to Jewish ceremonial law, why didst thou offer sacrifices, why were victims slain for thee according to the law? Thou wilt answer, doubtless, "To avoid giving offence to those of the Jews who had believed." To gain the Jews, thou didst pretend to be a Jew; and James and all the other elders taught thee this dissimulation. But thou didst not succeed in escaping, after all. For when thou wast on the point of being killed in a tumult which had arisen, thou wast rescued by the chief captain of the band, and was sent by him to Cæsarea, guarded by a careful escort of soldiers, lest the Jews should kill thee as a dissembler, and a destroyer of the law; and from Cæsarea coming to Rome, thou didst, in thine own hired house, preach Christ to both Jews and Gentiles, and thy testimony was sealed under Nero's sword.[2]

11. We have learned, therefore, that through fear of the Jews both Peter and Paul alike pretended that they observed the precepts of the law. How could Paul have the assurance and effrontery to reprove in another what he had done himself? I at least, or, I should rather say, others before me, have given such explanation of the matter as they deemed best, not defending the use of falsehood in the interest of religion,[3] as you charge them with doing, but teaching the

[1] Acts xxi. 17–26.
[2] Acts xxiii. 23, xxviii. 14, 30.
[3] Officiosum mendacium.

honourable exercise of a wise discretion;[1] seeking both to show the wisdom of the apostles, and to restrain the shameless blasphemies of Porphyry, who says that Peter and Paul quarrelled with each other in childish rivalry, and affirms that Paul had been inflamed with envy on account of the excellences of Peter, and had written boastfully of things which he either had not done, or, if he did them, had done with inexcusable presumption, reproving in another that which he himself had done. They, in answering him, gave the best interpretation of the passage which they could find; what interpretation have you to propound? Surely you must intend to say something better than they have said, since you have rejected the opinion of the ancient commentators.

CHAP. IV. 12. You say in your letter:[2] "You do not require me to teach you in what sense the apostle says, 'To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews;'[3] and other such things in the same passage, which are to be ascribed to the compassion of pitying love, not to the artifices of intentional deceit. For he that ministers to the sick becomes as if he were sick himself, not indeed falsely pretending to be under the fever, but considering with the mind of one truly sympathizing what he would wish done for himself if he were in the sick man's place. Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even when he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these, but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers; provided only that they did not build on these their hope of salvation, since the salvation which was foreshadowed in these has now been brought in by the Lord Jesus." The sum of your whole argument, which you have expanded into a most prolix dissertation, is this, that Peter did not err in supposing that the law was binding on those who from among the Jews had believed, but departed from the right course in this, that he compelled the

[1] Honestam dispensationem. [2] Letter XL. 4, p. 132. [3] 1 Cor. ix. 20.

Gentile converts to conform to Jewish observances. Now, if he compelled them, it was not by use of authority as a teacher, but by the example of his own practice. And Paul, according to your view, did not protest against what Peter had done personally, but asked wherefore Peter would compel those who were from among the Gentiles to conform to Jewish observances.

13. The matter in debate, therefore, or I should rather say your opinion regarding it, is summed up in this: that since the preaching of the gospel of Christ, the believing Jews do well in observing the precepts of the law, *i.e.* in offering sacrifices as Paul did, in circumcising their children, as Paul did in the case of Timothy, and keeping the Jewish Sabbath, as all the Jews have been accustomed to do. If this be true, we fall into the heresy of Cerinthus and Ebion, who, though believing in Christ, were anathematized by the fathers for this one error, that they mixed up the ceremonies of the law with the gospel of Christ, and professed their faith in that which was new, without letting go what was old. Why do I speak of the Ebionites, who make pretensions to the name of Christian? In our own day there exists a sect among the Jews throughout all the synagogues of the East, which is called the sect of the Minei, and is even now condemned by the Pharisees. The adherents to this sect are known commonly as Nazarenes; they believe in Christ the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary; and they say that He who suffered under Pontius Pilate and rose again, is the same as the one in whom we believe. But while they desire to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither the one nor the other. I therefore beseech you, who think that you are called upon to heal my slight wound, which is no more, so to speak, than a prick or scratch from a needle, to devote your skill in the healing art to this grievous wound, which has been opened by a spear driven home with the impetus of a javelin. For there is surely no proportion between the culpability of him who exhibits the various opinions held by the fathers in a commentary on Scripture, and the guilt of him who reintroduces within the Church a most pestilential heresy. If, however, there is for us no alternative but to receive the Jews into the

Church, along with the usages prescribed by their law; if, in short, it shall be declared lawful for them to continue in the Churches of Christ what they have been accustomed to practise in the synagogues of Satan, I will tell you my opinion of the matter: they will not become Christians, but they will make us Jews.

14. For what Christian will submit to hear what is said in your letter? "Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even when he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these; but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers." Now I implore you to hear patiently my complaint. Paul, even when he was an apostle of Christ, observed Jewish ceremonies; and you affirm that they are in no wise hurtful to those who wish to retain them as they had received them from their fathers by the law. I, on the contrary, shall maintain, and, though the world were to protest against my view, I may boldly declare that the Jewish ceremonies are to Christians both hurtful and fatal; and that whoever observes them, whether he be Jew or Gentile originally, is cast into the pit of perdition. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,"[1] that is, to both Jew and Gentile; for if the Jew be excepted, He is not the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Moreover, we read in the Gospel, "The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist."[2] Also, in another place: "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."[3] Again: "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace; for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."[4] Instead of the grace of the law which has passed away, we have

[1] Rom. x. 4.
[2] Matt. xi. 13 and Luke xvi. 16.
[3] John v. 18.
[4] John i. 16, 17.

received the grace of the gospel which is abiding; and instead of the shadows and types of the old dispensation, the truth has come by Jesus Christ. Jeremiah also prophesied thus in God's name: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt."[1] Observe what the prophet says, not to Gentiles, who had not been partakers in any former covenant, but to the Jewish nation. He who has given them the law by Moses, promises in place of it the new covenant of the gospel, that they might no longer live in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. Paul himself, moreover, in connection with whom the discussion of this question has arisen, delivers such sentiments as these frequently, of which I subjoin only a few, as I desire to be brief: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Again: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Again: "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."[2] From which it is evident that he has not the Holy Spirit who submits to the law, not, as our fathers affirmed the apostles to have done, feignedly, under the promptings of a wise discretion,[3] but, as you suppose to have been the case, sincerely. As to the quality of these legal precepts, let us learn from God's own teaching: "I gave them," He says, "statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live."[4] I say these things, not that I may, like Manichæus and Marcion, destroy the law, which I know on the testimony of the apostle to be both holy and spiritual; but because when "faith came," and the fulness of times, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,"[5] and might live no longer under the law as our schoolmaster, but under the Heir, who has now attained to full age, and is Lord.

[1] Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.
[2] Gal. v. 2, 4, 18.
[3] Dispensativé.
[4] Ezek. xx. 25.
[5] Gal. iv. 4.

15. It is further said in your letter: "The thing, therefore, which he rebuked in Peter was not his observing the customs handed down from his fathers, which Peter, if he wished, might do without being chargeable with deceit or inconsistency."[1] Again I say: Since you are a bishop, a teacher in the Churches of Christ, if you would prove what you assert, receive any Jew who, after having become a Christian, circumcises any son that may be born to him, observes the Jewish Sabbath, abstains from meats which God has created to be used with thanksgiving, and on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month slays a paschal lamb; and when you have done this, or rather, have refused to do it (for I know that you are a Christian, and will not be guilty of a profane action), you will be constrained, whether willingly or unwillingly, to renounce your opinion; and then you will know that it is a more difficult work to reject the opinion of others than to establish your own. Moreover, lest perhaps we should not believe your statement, or, I should rather say, understand it (for it is often the case that a discourse unduly extended is not intelligible, and is less censured by the unskilled in discussion because its weakness is not so easily perceived), you inculcate your opinion by reiterating the statement in these words: "Paul had forsaken everything peculiar to the Jews that was evil, especially this, that 'being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they had not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.'[2] In this, moreover, he differed from them, that after the passion and resurrection of Christ, in whom had been given and made manifest the mystery of grace, according to the order of Melchizedek, they still considered it binding on them to celebrate, not out of mere reverence for old customs, but as necessary to salvation, the sacraments of the old dispensation; which were indeed at one time necessary, else had it been unprofitable and vain for the Maccabees to suffer martyrdom as they did for their adherence to them.[3] Lastly, in this also Paul differed from the Jews, that they persecuted the Christian preachers of grace as enemies of the law. These, and all similar errors and sins, he declares

[1] Letter XL. sec. 5, p. 132. [2] Rom. x. 3. [3] 2 Macc. vii. 1.

that he counted but loss and dung, that he might win Christ."[1]

16. We have learned from you what evil things peculiar to the Jews Paul had abandoned; let us now learn from your teaching what good things which were Jewish he retained. You will reply: "The ceremonial observances in which they continue to follow the practice of their fathers, in the way in which these were complied with by Paul himself, without believing them to be at all necessary to salvation." I do not fully understand what you mean by the words, "without believing them to be at all necessary to salvation." For if they do not contribute to salvation, why are they observed? And if they must be observed, they by all means contribute to salvation; especially seeing that, because of observing them, some have been made martyrs: for they would not be observed unless they contributed to salvation. For they are not things indifferent—neither good nor bad, as philosophers say. Self-control is good, self-indulgence is bad: between these, and indifferent, as having no moral quality, are such things as walking, blowing one's nose, expectorating phlegm, etc. Such an action is neither good nor bad; for whether you do it or leave it undone, it does not affect your standing as righteous or unrighteous. But the observance of legal ceremonies is not a thing indifferent; it is either good or bad. You say it is good. I affirm it to be bad, and bad not only when done by Gentile converts, but also when done by Jews who have believed. In this passage you fall, if I am not mistaken, into one error while avoiding another. For while you guard yourself against the blasphemies of Porphyry, you become entangled in the snares of Ebion; pronouncing that the law is binding on those who from among the Jews have believed. Perceiving, again, that what you have said is a dangerous doctrine, you attempt to qualify it by words which are only superfluous: viz., "The law must be observed not from any belief, such as prompted the Jews to keep it, that this is necessary to salvation, and not in any misleading dissimulation such as Paul reproved in Peter."

17. Peter therefore pretended to keep the law; but this

[1] Phil. iii. 8. Letter XL. sec. 6, p. 133.

censor of Peter boldly observed the things prescribed by the law. The next words of your letter are these: "For if Paul observed these sacraments in order, by pretending to be a Jew, to gain the Jews, why did he not also take part with the Gentiles in heathen sacrifices, when to them that were without law he became as without law, that he might gain them also? The explanation is found in this, that he took part in the Jewish rites as being himself a Jew; and that when he said all this which I have quoted, he meant not that he pretended to be what he was not, but that he felt with true compassion that he must bring such help to them as would be needful for himself if he were involved in their error.[1] Herein he exercised not the subtlety of a deceiver, but the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer." A triumphant vindication of Paul! You prove that he did not pretend to share the error of the Jews, but was actually involved in it; and that he refused to imitate Peter in a course of deception, dissembling through fear of the Jews what he really was, but without reserve freely avowed himself to be a Jew. Oh, unheard-of compassion of the apostle! In seeking to make the Jews Christians, he himself became a Jew! For he could not have persuaded the luxurious to become temperate if he had not himself become luxurious like them; and could not have brought help, in his compassion, as you say, to the wretched, otherwise than by experiencing in his own person their wretchedness! Truly wretched, and worthy of most compassionate lamentation, are those who, carried away by vehemence of disputation, and by love for the law which has been abolished, have made Christ's apostle to be a Jew. Nor is there, after all, a great difference between my opinion and yours: for I say that both Peter and Paul, through fear of the believing Jews, practised, or rather pretended to practise, the precepts of the Jewish law; whereas you maintain that they did this out of pity, "not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer." But by both this is equally admitted, that (whether from fear or from pity) they pretended to be what they were not. As to your argument against our view, that he ought to have

[1] Letter XL. 6, p. 133.

become to the Gentiles a Gentile, if to the Jews he became a Jew, this favours our opinion rather than yours: for as he did not actually become a Jew, so he did not actually become a heathen; and as he did not actually become a heathen, so he did not actually become a Jew. His conformity to the Gentiles consisted in this, that he received as Christians the uncircumcised who believed in Christ, and left them free to use without scruple meats which the Jewish law prohibited; but not, as you suppose, in taking part in their worship of idols. For "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but the keeping of the commandments of God."[1]

18. I ask you, therefore, and with all urgency press the request, that you forgive me this humble attempt at a discussion of the matter; and wherein I have transgressed, lay the blame upon yourself who compelled me to write in reply, and who made me out to be as blind as Stesichorus. And do not bring the reproach of teaching the practice of lying upon me who am a follower of Christ, who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."[2] It is impossible for me, who am a worshipper of the Truth, to bow under the yoke of falsehood. Moreover, refrain from stirring up against me the unlearned crowd who esteem you as their bishop, and regard with the respect due to the priestly office the orations which you deliver in the church, but who esteem lightly an old decrepit man like me, courting the retirement of a monastery far from the busy haunts of men; and seek others who may be more fitly instructed or corrected by you. For the sound of your voice can scarcely reach me, who am so far separated from you by sea and land. And if you happen to write me a letter, Italy and Rome are sure to be acquainted with its contents long before it is brought to me, to whom alone it ought to be sent.

CHAP. V. 19. In another letter you ask why a former translation which I made of some of the canonical books was carefully marked with asterisks and obelisks, whereas I afterwards published a translation without these. You must pardon my saying that you seem to me not to understand the matter: for the former translation is from the Septuagint; and wher-

[1] Gal. v. 6 and vi. 15. [2] John xiv. 6.

ever obelisks are placed, they are designed to indicate that the Seventy have said more than is found in the Hebrew. But the asterisks indicate what has been added by Origen from the version of Theodotion. In that version I was translating from the Greek: but in the later version, translating from the Hebrew itself, I have expressed what I understood it to mean, being careful to preserve rather the exact sense than the order of the words. I am surprised that you do not read the books of the Seventy translators in the genuine form in which they were originally given to the world, but as they have been corrected, or rather corrupted, by Origen, with his obelisks and asterisks; and that you refuse to follow the translation, however feeble, which has been given by a Christian man, especially seeing that Origen borrowed the things which he has added from the edition of a man who, after the passion of Christ, was a Jew and a blasphemer. Do you wish to be a true admirer and partisan of the Seventy translators? Then do not read what you find under the asterisks; rather erase them from the volumes, that you may approve yourself indeed a follower of the ancients. If, however, you do this, you will be compelled to find fault with all the libraries of the Churches; for you will scarcely find more than one MS. here and there which has not these interpolations.

CHAP. VI. 20. A few words now as to your remark that I ought not to have given a translation, after this had been already done by the ancients; and the novel syllogism which you use: "The passages of which the Seventy have given an interpretation were either obscure or plain. If they were obscure, it is believed that you are as likely to have been mistaken as the others; if they were plain, it is not believed that the Seventy could possibly have been mistaken."[1]

All the commentators who have been our predecessors in the Lord in the work of expounding the Scriptures, have expounded either what was obscure or what was plain. If some passages were obscure, how could you, after them, presume to discuss that which they were not able to explain? If the passages were plain, it was a waste of time for you to have undertaken to treat of that which could not possibly have

[1] Letter XXVIII. ch. ii. p. 80.

escaped them. This syllogism applies with peculiar force to the book of Psalms, in the interpretation of which Greek commentators have written many volumes: viz. 1*st*, Origen; 2*d*, Eusebius of Cæsarea; 3*d*, Theodorus of Heraclea; 4*th*, Asterius of Scythopolis; 5*th*, Apollinaris of Laodicea; and, 6*th*, Didymus of Alexandria. There are said to be minor works on selections from the Psalms, but I speak at present of the whole book. Moreover, among Latin writers the Bishops Hilary of Poitiers, and Eusebius of Verceil, have translated Origen and Eusebius of Cæsarea, the former of whom has in some things been followed by our own Ambrose. Now, I put it to your wisdom to answer why you, after all the labours of so many and so competent interpreters, differ from them in your exposition of some passages? If the Psalms are obscure, it must be believed that you are as likely to be mistaken as others; if they are plain, it is incredible that these others could have fallen into mistake. In either case, your exposition has been, by your own showing, an unnecessary labour; and on the same principle, no one would ever venture to speak on any subject after others have pronounced their opinion, and no one would be at liberty to write anything regarding that which another has once handled, however important the matter might be.

It is, however, more in keeping with your enlightened judgment, to grant to all others the liberty which you tolerate in yourself; for in my attempt to translate into Latin, for the benefit of those who speak the same language with myself, the corrected Greek version of the Scriptures, I have laboured not to supersede what has been long esteemed, but only to bring prominently forward those things which have been either omitted or tampered with by the Jews, in order that Latin readers might know what is found in the original Hebrew. If any one is averse to reading it, none compels him against his will. Let him drink with satisfaction the old wine, and despise my new wine, *i.e.* the sentences which I have published in explanation of former writers, with the design of making more obvious by my remarks what in them seemed to me to be obscure.

As to the principles which ought to be followed in the in-

terpretation of the Sacred Scriptures, they are stated in the book which I have written,[1] and in all the introductions to the divine books which I have in my edition prefixed to each; and to these I think it sufficient to refer the prudent reader. And since you approve of my labours in revising the translation of the New Testament, as you say,—giving me at the same time this as your reason, that very many are acquainted with the Greek language, and are therefore competent judges of my work,—it would have been but fair to have given me credit for the same fidelity in the Old Testament; for I have not followed my own imagination, but have rendered the divine words as I found them understood by those who speak the Hebrew language. If you have any doubt of this in any passage, ask the Jews what is the meaning of the original.

21. Perhaps you will say, "What if the Jews decline to answer, or choose to impose upon us?" Is it conceivable that the whole multitude of Jews will agree together to be silent if asked about my translation, and that none shall be found that has any knowledge of the Hebrew language? Or will they all imitate those Jews whom you mention as having, in some little town, conspired to injure my reputation? For in your letter you put together the following story:—"A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the Church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so many generations in the Church. Thereupon arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew MSS. were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a

[1] *De optimo genere interpretandi.*

congregation,—a calamity which he narrowly escaped. From this case we also are led to think that you may be occasionally mistaken."[1]

CHAP. VII. 22. You tell me that I have given a wrong translation of some word in Jonah, and that a worthy bishop narrowly escaped losing his charge through the clamorous tumult of his people, which was caused by the different rendering of this one word. At the same time, you withhold from me what the word was which I have mistranslated; thus taking away the possibility of my saying anything in my own vindication, lest my reply should be fatal to your objection. Perhaps it is the old dispute about the gourd which has been revived, after slumbering for many long years since the illustrious man, who in that day combined in his own person the ancestral honours of the Cornelii and of Asinius Pollio,[2] brought against me the charge of giving in my translation the word "ivy" instead of "gourd." I have already given a sufficient answer to this in my commentary on Jonah. At present, I deem it enough to say that in that passage, where the Septuagint has "gourd," and Aquila and the others have rendered the word "ivy" (κίσσος), the Hebrew MS. has "ciceion," which is in the Syriac tongue, as now spoken, "ciceia." It is a kind of shrub having large leaves like a vine, and when planted it quickly springs up to the size of a small tree, standing upright by its own stem, without requiring any support of canes or poles, as both gourds and ivy do. If, therefore, in translating word for word, I had put the word "ciceia," no one would know what it meant; if I had used the word "gourd," I would have said what is not found in the Hebrew. I therefore put down "ivy," that I might not differ from all other translators. But if your Jews said, either through malice or ignorance, as you yourself suggest, that the word is in the Hebrew text which is found in the Greek and Latin versions, it is evident that they were either unacquainted with Hebrew,

[1] Letter LXXI. sec. 5, p. 262.

[2] The critic here referred to was Canthelius, whom Jerome abuses in his commentary on the passage, insinuating that the reason why the gourds found in this scion of a noble house a champion so devoted, was that they had often rendered him a service which ivy could not have done, screening his secret potations from public notice.

or have been pleased to say what was not true, in order to make sport of the gourd-planters.

In closing this letter, I beseech you to have some consideration for a soldier who is now old and has long retired from active service, and not to force him to take the field and again expose his life to the chances of war. Do you, who are young, and who have been appointed to the conspicuous seat of pontifical dignity, give yourself to teaching the people, and enrich Rome with new stores from fertile Africa.[1] I am contented to make but little noise in an obscure corner of a monastery, with one to hear me or read to me.

LETTER LXXVI.

(A.D. 402.)

1. HEAR, O Donatists, what the Catholic Church says to you: "O ye sons of men, how long will ye be slow of heart? why will ye love vanity, and follow after lies?"[2] Why have you severed yourselves, by the heinous impiety of schism, from the unity of the whole world? You give heed to the falsehoods concerning the surrendering of the divine books to persecutors, which men who are either deceiving you, or are themselves deceived, utter in order that you may die in a state of heretical separation: and you do not give heed to what these divine books themselves proclaim, in order that you may live in the peace of the Catholic Church. Wherefore do you lend an open ear to the words of men who tell you things which they have never been able to prove, and are deaf to the voice of God speaking thus: "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession"?[3] "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, 'And to thy seed,' which is Christ."[4] And the promise to which the apostle refers is this: "In thy seed shall

[1] Alluding to the extent to which Rome was indebted to Africa for corn.
[2] Ps. iv. 2. [3] Ps. ii. 7, 8. [4] Gal. iii. 16.

all the nations of the earth be blessed."[1] Therefore lift up the eyes of your souls, and see how in the whole world all nations are blessed in Abraham's seed. Abraham, in his day, believed what was not yet seen; but you who see it refuse to believe what has been fulfilled.[2] The Lord's death was the ransom of the world; He paid the price for the whole world; and you do not dwell in concord with the whole world, as would be for your advantage, but stand apart and strive contentiously to destroy the whole world, to your own loss. Hear now what is said in the Psalm concerning this ransom: "They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."[3] Wherefore will you be guilty of dividing the garments of the Lord, and not hold in common with the whole world that coat of charity, woven from above throughout, which even His executioners did not rend? In the same Psalm we read that the whole world holds this, for he says: "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee; for the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the Governor among the nations."[4] Open the ears of your soul, and hear: "The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof; out of Zion, the perfection of beauty."[5] If you do not wish to understand this, hear the gospel from the Lord's own lips, how He said: "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Him; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."[6] The words in the Psalm, "the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof," correspond to these in the Gospel, "among all nations;" and as He said in the Psalm, "from Zion, the perfection of beauty," He has said in the Gospel, "beginning at Jerusalem."

[1] Gen. xxii. 18.
[2] The original here is antithetical: "jam vos videtis, et adhuc invidetis."
[3] Ps. xxii. 16, 17, 18. [4] Ps. xxii. 27, 28. [5] Ps. l. 1, 2.
[6] Luke xxiv. 44, 47.

2. Your imagination that you are separating yourselves, before the time of the harvest, from the tares which are mixed with the wheat, proves that you are only tares. For if you were wheat, you would bear with the tares, and not separate yourselves from that which is growing in Christ's field. Of the tares, indeed, it has been said, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold;" but of the wheat it is said, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."[1] What grounds have you for believing that the tares have increased and filled the world, and that the wheat has decreased, and is found now in Africa alone? You claim to be Christians, and you disclaim the authority of Christ. He said, "Let both grow together till the harvest;" He said not, "Let the wheat decrease, and let the tares multiply." He said, "The field is the world;" He said not, "The field is Africa." He said, "The harvest is the end of the world;" He said not, "The harvest is the time of Donatus." He said, "The reapers are the angels;" He said not, "The reapers are the captains of the Circumcelliones."[2] But you, by charging the good wheat with being tares, have proved yourselves to be tares; and what is worse, you have prematurely separated yourselves from the wheat. For some of your predecessors, in whose impious schism you obstinately remain, delivered up to persecutors the sacred MSS. and the vessels of the Church (as may be seen in municipal records[3]); others of them passed over the fault which these men confessed, and remained in communion with them; and both parties having come together to Carthage as an infatuated faction, condemned others without a hearing, on the charge of that fault which they had agreed, so far as they themselves were concerned, to forgive, and then set up a bishop against the ordained bishop, and erected an altar against the altar already recognised. Afterwards they sent to the Emperor Constantine a letter begging that bishops of churches beyond the sea should be appointed to arbitrate between the bishops of Africa. When the judges whom they sought were granted, and at Rome had given their decision, they refused to submit to it, and complained to the

[1] Matt. xxiv. 12, 13. [2] Matt. xiii. 30-39.
[3] Proceedings before Munatius Felix, Letter LIII. sec. 4, p. 193.

Emperor against the bishops as having judged unrighteously. From the sentence of another bench of bishops sent to Arles to try the case, they appealed to the Emperor himself. When he had heard them, and they had been proved guilty of calumny, they still persisted in their wickedness. Awake to the interests of your salvation! love peace, and return to unity! Whensoever you desire it, we are ready to recite in detail the events to which we have referred.

3. He is the associate of wicked men who consents to the deeds of wicked men; not he who suffers the tares to grow in the Lord's field unto the harvest, or the chaff to remain until the final winnowing time. If you hate those who do evil, shake yourselves free from the crime of schism. If you really feared to associate with the wicked, you would not for so many years have permitted Optatus[1] to remain among you when he was living in the most flagrant sin. And as you now give him the name of martyr, you must, if you are consistent, give him for whom he died the name of Christ. Finally, wherein has the Christian world offended you, from which you have insanely and wickedly cut yourselves off? and what claim upon your esteem have those followers of Maximianus, whom you have received back with honour after they had been condemned by you, and violently cast forth by warrant of the civil authorities from their churches? Wherein has the peace of Christ offended you, that you resist it by separating yourselves from those whom you calumniate? and wherein has the peace of Donatus earned your favour, that to promote it you receive back those whom you condemned? Felicianus of Musti is now one of you. We have read concerning him, that he was formerly condemned by your council, and afterwards accused by you at the bar of the proconsul, and in the town of Musti was attacked as is stated in the municipal records.

4. If the surrendering of the sacred books to destruction is a crime which, in the case of the king who burned the book of Jeremiah, God punished with death as a prisoner of

[1] Optatus, Donatist bishop of Thamugada, was cast into prison A.D. 397, and died there. He was a partisan of Gildo in his rebellion against Honorius, and shared the misfortunes, as he had participated in the crimes, of his chief.

war,[1] how much greater is the guilt of schism! For those authors of schism to whom you have compared the followers of Maximianus, the earth opening, swallowed up alive.[2] Why, then, do you object against us the charge of surrendering the sacred books which you do not prove, and at the same time both condemn and welcome back those among yourselves who are schismatics? If you are proved to be in the right by the fact that you have suffered persecution from the Emperor, a still stronger claim than yours must be that of the followers of Maximianus, whom you have yourselves persecuted by the help of judges sent to you by Catholic emperors. If you alone have baptism, what weight do you attach to the baptism administered by followers of Maximianus in the case of those whom Felicianus baptized while he was under your sentence of condemnation, who came along with him when he was afterwards restored by you? Let your bishops answer these questions to your laity at least, if they will not debate with us; and do you, as you value your salvation, consider what kind of doctrine that must be about which they refuse to enter into discussion with us. If the wolves have prudence enough to keep out of the way of the shepherds, why have the flock so lost their prudence, that they go into the dens of the wolves?

LETTER LXXVII.

(A.D. 404.)

TO FELIX AND HILARINUS, MY LORDS MOST BELOVED, AND BRETHREN WORTHY OF ALL HONOUR, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. I DO not wonder to see the minds of believers disturbed by Satan, whom resist, continuing in the hope which rests on the promises of God, who cannot lie, who has not only condescended to promise in eternity rewards to us who believe and hope in Him, and who persevere in love unto the end, but has also foretold that in time offences by which our faith

[1] Jer. xxxvi. 23, 30. [2] Num. xvi. 31-33.

must be tried and proved shall not be wanting; for He said, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold;" but He added immediately, "and he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved."[1] Why, therefore, should it seem strange that men bring calumnies against the servants of God, and being unable to turn them aside from an upright life, endeavour to blacken their reputation, seeing that they do not cease uttering blasphemies daily against God, the Lord of these servants, if they are displeased by anything in which the execution of His righteous and secret counsel is contrary to their desire? Wherefore I appeal to your wisdom, my lords most beloved, and brethren worthy of all honour, and exhort you to exercise your minds in the way which best becomes Christians, setting over against the empty calumnies and groundless suspicions of men the written word of God, which has foretold that these things should come, and has warned us to meet them with fortitude.

2. Let me therefore say in a few words to your Charity, that the presbyter Boniface has not been discovered by me to be guilty of any crime, and that I have never believed, and do not yet believe, any charge brought against him. How, then, could I order his name to be deleted from the roll of presbyters, when filled with alarm by that word of our Lord in the gospel: "With what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged"?[2] For, seeing that the dispute which has arisen between him and Spes has by their consent been submitted to divine arbitration in a way which, if you desire it, can be made known to you,[3] who am I, that I should presume to anticipate the divine award by deleting or passing over his name? As a bishop, I ought not rashly to suspect him; and as being only a man, I cannot decide infallibly concerning things which are hidden from me. Even in secular matters, when an appeal has been made to a higher authority, all procedure is sisted while the case awaits the decision from which there is no appeal; because if anything were changed while

[1] Matt. xxiv. 12, 13. [2] Matt. vii. 2.

[3] He refers to their visiting the tomb of Felix of Nola, in the hope that by some miracle there the innocent and the guilty would be distinguished. See Letter LXXVIII. sec. 3, p. 308.

the matter is depending on his arbitration, this would be an insult to the higher tribunal. And how great the distance between even the highest human authority and the divine!

May the mercy of the Lord our God never forsake you, my lords most beloved, and brethren worthy of all honour.

LETTER LXXVIII.

(A.D. 404.)

TO MY MOST BELOVED BRETHREN, THE CLERGY, ELDERS, AND PEOPLE OF THE CHURCH OF HIPPO, WHOM I SERVE IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST, I, AUGUSTINE, SEND GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. WOULD that you, giving earnest heed to the word of God, did not require counsel of mine to support you under whatsoever offences may arise! Would that your comfort rather came from Him by whom we also are comforted; who has foretold not only the good things which He designs to give to those who are holy and faithful, but also the evil things in which this world is to abound; and has caused these to be written, in order that we may expect the blessings which are to follow the end of this world with a certainty not less complete than that which attends our present experience of the evils which had been predicted as coming before the end of the world! Wherefore also the apostle says, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."[1] And wherefore did our Lord Himself judge it necessary not only to say, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,"[2] which shall come to pass after the end of the world, but also to exclaim, "Woe unto the world because of offences!"[3] if not to prevent us from flattering ourselves with the idea that we can reach the mansions of eternal felicity, unless we have overcome the temptation to yield when exercised by the afflictions of time? Why was it necessary for Him to say, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold," if not in order that

[1] Rom. xv. 4. [2] Matt. xiii. 43. [3] Matt. xviii. 7.

those of whom He spoke in the next sentence, "but he that shall endure to the end shall be saved,"[1] might, when they saw love waxing cold through abounding iniquity, be saved from being put to confusion, or filled with fear, or crushed with grief about such things, as if they were strange and unlooked for, and might rather, through witnessing the events which had been predicted as appointed to occur before the end, be assisted in patiently enduring unto the end, so as to obtain after the end the reward of reigning in peace in that life which has no end?

2. Wherefore, beloved, in regard to that scandal by which some are troubled concerning the presbyter Boniface, I do not say to you that you are not to be grieved for it; for in men who do not grieve for such things the love of Christ is not, whereas those who take pleasure in such things are filled with the malice of the devil. Not, however, that anything has come to our knowledge which deserves censure in the presbyter aforesaid, but that two in our house are so situated that one of them must be regarded as beyond all doubt wicked; and though the conscience of the other be not defiled, his good name is forfeited in the eyes of some, and suspected by others. Grieve for these things, for they are to be lamented; but do not so grieve as to let your love grow cold, and yourselves be indifferent to holy living. Let it rather burn the more vehemently in the exercise of prayer to God, that if your presbyter is guiltless (which I am the more inclined to believe, because, when he had discovered the immoral and vile proposal of the other, he would neither consent to it nor conceal it), a divine decision may speedily restore him to the exercise of his official duties with his innocence vindicated; and that if, on the other hand, knowing himself to be guilty, which I dare not suspect, he has deliberately tried to destroy the good name of another when he could not corrupt his morals, as he charges his accuser with having done, God may not permit him to hide his wickedness, so that the thing which men cannot discover may be revealed by the judgment of God, to the conviction of the one or of the other.

[1] Matt. xxiv. 12, 13.

3. For when this case had long disquieted me, and I could find no way of convicting either of the two as guilty, although I rather inclined to believe the presbyter innocent, I had at first resolved to leave both in the hand of God, without deciding the case, until something should be done by the one of whom I had suspicion, giving just and unquestionable reasons for his expulsion from our house. But when he was labouring most earnestly to obtain promotion to the rank of the clergy, either on the spot from myself, or elsewhere through letter of recommendation from me, and I could on no account be induced either to lay hands in the act of ordination upon one of whom I thought so ill, or to consent to introduce him through commendation of mine to any brother for the same purpose, he began to act more violently, demanding that if he was not to be promoted to clerical orders, Boniface should not be permitted to retain his status as a presbyter. This demand having been made, when I perceived that Boniface was unwilling that, through doubts as to his holiness of life, offence should be given to any who were weak and inclined to suspect him, and that he was ready to suffer the loss of his honour among men rather than vainly persist even to the disquieting of the Church in a contention the very nature of which made it impossible for him to prove his innocence (of which he was conscious) to the satisfaction of those who did not know him, or were in doubt or prone to suspicion in regard to him, I fixed upon the following as a means of discovering the truth. Both pledged themselves in a solemn compact to go to a holy place, where the more awe-inspiring works of God might much more readily make manifest the evil of which either of them was conscious, and compel the guilty to confess, either by judgment or through fear of judgment. God is everywhere, it is true, and He that made all things is not contained or confined to dwell in any place; and He is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth by His true worshippers,[1] in order that, as He heareth in secret, He may also in secret justify and reward. But in regard to the answers to prayer which are visible to men, who can search out His reasons for appointing some places rather than others to be the scene of miraculous inter-

[1] John iv. 24.

positions? To many the holiness of the place in which the body of the blessed Felix is buried is well known, and to this place I desired them to repair; because from it we may receive more easily and more reliably a written account of whatever may be discovered in either of them by divine interposition. For I myself knew how, at Milan, at the tomb of the saints, where demons are brought in a most marvellous and awful manner to confess their deeds, a thief who had come thither intending to deceive by perjuring himself, was compelled to own his theft, and to restore what he had taken away; and is not Africa also full of the bodies of holy martyrs? Yet we do not know of such things being done in any place here. Even as the gift of healing and the gift of discerning of spirits are not given to all saints,[1] as the apostle declares; so it is not at all the tombs of the saints that it has pleased Him who divideth to each severally as He will, to cause such miracles to be wrought.

4. Wherefore, although I had purposed not to let this most heavy burden on my heart come to your knowledge, lest I should disquiet you by a painful but useless vexation, it has pleased God to make it known to you, perhaps for this reason, that you may along with me devote yourselves to prayer, beseeching Him to condescend to reveal that which He knoweth, but which we cannot know in this matter. For I did not presume to suppress or erase from the roll of his colleagues the name of this presbyter, lest I should seem to insult the Divine Majesty, upon whose arbitration the case now depends, if I were to forestall His decision by any premature decision of mine: for even in secular affairs, when a perplexing case is referred to a higher authority, the inferior judges do not presume to make any change while the reference is pending. Moreover, it was decreed in a Council of bishops[2] that no clergyman who has not yet been proved guilty be suspended from communion, unless he fail to present himself for the examination of the charges against him. Boniface, however, humbly agreed to forego his claim to a letter of commendation, by the use of which on his journey he might

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 9, 10, 30.

[2] Third Council of Carthage, A.D. 397, Can. 7, 8.

have secured the recognition of his rank, preferring that both should stand on a footing of equality in a place where both were alike unknown. And now, if you prefer that his name should not be read, that we "may cut off occasion," as the apostle says, from those that desire occasion[1] to justify their unwillingness to come to the Church, this omission of his name shall be not our deed, but theirs on whose account it may be done. For what does it harm any man, that men through ignorance refuse to have his name read from that tablet, so long as a guilty conscience does not blot his name out of the Book of Life?

5. Wherefore, my brethren who fear God, remember what the Apostle Peter says: "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."[2] When he cannot devour a man through seducing him into iniquity, he attempts to injure his good name, that if it be possible, he may give way under the reproaches of men and the calumnies of slandering tongues, and may thus fall into his jaws. If, however, he be unable even to sully the good name of one who is innocent, he tries to persuade him to cherish unkindly suspicions of his brother, and judge him harshly, and so become entangled, and be an easy prey. And who is able to know or to tell all his snares and wiles? Nevertheless, in reference to those three, which belong more especially to the case before us; in the first place, lest you should be turned aside to wickedness through following bad examples, God gives you by the apostle these warnings: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?"[3] and in another place: "Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners; awake to righteousness,[4] and sin not."[5] Secondly, that ye may not give way under the tongues of slanderers, He saith by the prophet, "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law: fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.[6] For the moth shall

[1] 2 Cor. xi. 12. [2] 1 Pet. v. 8. [3] 2 Cor. vi. 14.
[4] Aug. translates, "be sober and righteous." [5] 1 Cor. xv. 33, 34.
[6] "Nor count it a great thing that they despise you."—Aug.

eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but My righteousness shall be for ever."[1] And thirdly, lest you should be undone through groundless and malevolent suspicions concerning any servants of God, remember that word of the apostle, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God;"[2] and this also, "The things which are revealed belong to you, but the secret things belong unto the Lord your God."[3]

6. It is indeed manifest that such things do not take place in the Church without great sorrow on the part of saints and believers; but let Him be our Comforter who hath foretold all these events, and has warned us not to become cold in love through abounding iniquity, to endure to the end that we may be saved. For, as far as I am concerned, if there be in me a spark of the love of Christ, who among you is weak, and I am not weak? who among you is offended, and I burn not?[4] Do not therefore add to my distresses, by your yielding either by groundless suspicions or by occasion of other men's sins. Do not, I beseech you, lest I say of you, "They have added to the pain of my wounds."[5] For it is much more easy to bear the reproach of those who take open pleasure in these our pains, of whom it was foretold in regard to Christ Himself, "They that sit in the gate speak against Me, and I was the song of the drunkards,"[6] for whom also we have been taught to pray, and to seek their welfare. For why do they sit at the gate, and what do they watch for, if it be not for this, that so soon as any bishop or clergyman or monk or nun has fallen, they may have ground for believing, and boasting, and maintaining that all are the same as the one that has fallen, but that all cannot be convicted and unmasked? Yet these very men do not straightway cast forth their wives, or bring accusation against their mothers, if some married woman

[1] Isa. li. 7, 8. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 5.

[3] Deut. xxix. 29. This verse is the nearest I can find to the words here quoted by the apostle. The reference in the Bened. edition to 1 Cor. v. 12 must be a mistake.

[4] 2 Cor. xi. 29. [5] Ps. lxix. 26, as translated by Aug. [6] Ps. lxix. 12.

has been discovered to be an adulteress. But the moment that any crime is either falsely alleged or actually proved against any one who makes a profession of piety, these men are incessant and unwearied in their efforts to make this charge be believed against all religious men. Those men, therefore, who eagerly find what is sweet to their malicious tongues in the things which grieve us, we may compare to those dogs (if, indeed, they are to be understood as increasing his misery) which licked the sores of the beggar who lay before the rich man's gate, and endured with patience every hardship and indignity until he should come to rest in Abraham's bosom.[1]

7. Do not add to my sorrows, O ye who have some hope toward God. Let not the wounds which these lick be multiplied by you, for whom we are in jeopardy every hour, having fightings without and fears within, and perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils by the heathen, and perils by false brethren.[2] I know that you are grieved, but is your grief more poignant than mine? I know that you are disquieted, and I fear lest by the tongues of slanderers some weak one for whom Christ died should perish. Let not my grief be increased by you, for it is not through my fault that this grief was made yours. For I used the utmost precautions to secure, if it were possible, both that the steps necessary for the prevention of this evil should not be neglected, and that it should not be brought to your knowledge, since this could only cause unavailing vexation to the strong, and dangerous disquietude to the weak, among you. But may He who hath permitted you to be tempted by knowing this, give you strength to bear the trial, and "teach you out of His law, and give you rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked."[3]

8. I hear that some of you are more cast down with sorrow by this event, than by the fall of the two deacons who had joined us from the Donatist party, as if they had brought reproach upon the discipline of Proculeianus;[4] whereas this checks your boasting about me, that under my discipline no

[1] Luke xvi. 21–23.
[2] 2 Cor. vii. 5 and xi. 26.
[3] Ps. xciv. 12, 13.
[4] Donatist bishop of Hippo.

[redacted]tency among the clergy had taken place. Let you, whoever you are that have done this, ell. Behold, God hath taught you, "He glory in the Lord;"[1] and ye ought to cn against heretics but this, that they are not Be not like these heretics, who, because they have ig to plead in defence of their schism, attempt nothing beyond heaping up charges against the men from whom they are separated, and most falsely boast that in these we have an unenviable pre-eminence, in order that since they can neither impugn nor darken the truth of the Divine Scripture, from which the Church of Christ spread abroad everywhere receives its testimony, they may bring into disfavour the men by whom it is preached, against whom they are capable of affirming anything—whatever comes into their mind. "But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him."[2] For He Himself has guarded His believing people from undue disquietude concerning wickedness, even in stewards of the divine mysteries, as doing evil which was their own, but speaking good which was His. "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."[3] Pray by all means for me, lest perchance "when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway;"[4] but when you glory, glory not in me, but in the Lord. For however watchful the discipline of my house may be, I am but a man, and I live among men; and I do not presume to pretend that my house is better than the ark of Noah, in which among eight persons one was found a castaway;[5] or better than the house of Abraham, regarding which it was said, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son;"[6] or better than the house of Isaac, regarding whose twin sons it was said, "I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau;"[7] or better than the house of Jacob himself, in which Reuben defiled his father's bed;[8] or better than the house of David, in which one son wrought folly with his sister,[9] and another rebelled against a father of such holy clemency;

[1] 1 Cor. i. 31.
[2] Eph. iv. 20, 21.
[3] Matt. xxiii. 3.
[4] 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[5] Gen. ix. 27.
[6] Gen. xxi. 10.
[7] Mal. i. 2.
[8] Gen. xlix. 4.
[9] 2 Sam. xiii. 14.

or better than the band of companions of Paul, [redacted] who nevertheless would not have said, as above [redacted] out are fightings, and within are fears," if [redacted] none but good men; nor would have sa[redacted] holiness and fidelity of Timothy, "I have no m[redacted] who will naturally care for your state; for all seek [redacted] not the things which are Jesus Christ's;"[1] or better tha[redacted] band of the disciples of the Lord Christ Himself, in which eleven good men bore with Judas, who was a thief and a traitor; or, finally, better than heaven itself, from which the angels fell.

9. I frankly avow to your Charity, before the Lord our God, whom I have taken, since the time when I began to serve Him, as a witness upon my soul, that as I have hardly found any men better than those who have done well in monasteries, so I have not found any men worse than monks who have fallen; whence I suppose that to them applies the word written in the Apocalypse, "He that is righteous, let him be still more righteous; and he that is filthy, let him be still more filthy."[2] Wherefore, if we be grieved by some foul blemishes, we are comforted by a much larger proportion of examples of an opposite kind. Let not, therefore, the dregs which offend your eyes cause you to hate the oil-presses whence the Lord's storehouses are supplied to their profit with a more brightly illuminating oil.

May the mercy of our Lord keep you in His peace, safe from all the snares of the enemy, my dearly beloved brethren.

LETTER LXXIX.

(A.D. 404.)

A short and stern challenge to some Manichæan teacher who had succeeded Fortunatus (supposed to be Felix).

YOUR attempts at evasion are to no purpose: your real character is patent even a long way off. My brethren have reported to me their conversation with you. 'You say that you do not fear death; it is well: but you ought to fear that

[1] Phil. ii. 20, 21. [2] Rev. xxii. 11.

death which you are bringing upon yourself by your blasphe- [redacted] assertions concerning God. As to your understanding [redacted]ible death which all men know is a separation [redacted]nd body, this is a truth which demands no [redacted]tellect. But as to the statement which you [redacted]this, that death is a separation between good and [redacted]uo you not see that, if the soul be good and the body be evil, he who joined them together[1] is not good? But you affirm that the good God has joined them together; from which it follows that He is either evil, or swayed by fear of one who is evil. Yet you boast of your having no fear of man, when at the same time you conceive God to be such that, through fear of Darkness, He would join together good and evil. Be not uplifted, as your writing shows you to be, by supposing that I magnify you, by my resolving to check the outflowing of your poison, lest its insidious and pestilential power should do harm: for the apostle does not magnify those whom he calls "dogs," saying to the Philippians, "Beware of dogs;"[2] nor does he magnify those of whom he says that their word doth eat as a canker.[3] Therefore, in the name of Christ, I demand of you to answer, if you are able, the question which baffled your predecessor Fortunatus.[4] For he went from the scene of our discussion declaring that he would not return, unless, after conferring with his party, he found something by which he could answer the arguments used by our brethren. And if you are not prepared to do this, begone from this place, and do not pervert the right ways of the Lord, ensnaring and infecting with your poison the minds of the weak, lest, by the Lord's right hand helping me, you be put to confusion in a way which you did not expect.

[1] Commiscuit. [2] Phil. iii. 2. [3] 2 Tim. ii. 17.

[4] In his Retractations, i. 16, Augustine mentions his having defeated Fortunatus in discussion before he was made bishop of Hippo.

LETTER LXXX.

(A.D. 404.)

A letter to Paulinus, asking him to explain more fully how [illegible] is the will of God and rule of our duty in the ordinary course [illegible] This letter may be omitted as merely propounding a question, taining nothing specially noticeable.

LETTER LXXXI.

(A.D. 405.)

TO AUGUSTINE, MY LORD TRULY HOLY, AND MOST BLESSED FATHER, JEROME SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

HAVING anxiously inquired of our holy brother Firmus regarding your state, I was glad to hear that you are well. I expected him to bring, or, I should rather say, I insisted upon his giving me, a letter from you; upon which he told me that he had set out from Africa without communicating to you his intention. I therefore send to you my respectful salutations through this brother, who clings to you with a singular warmth of affection; and at the same time, in regard to my last letter, I beg you to forgive the modesty which made it impossible for me to refuse you, when you had so long required me to write you in reply. That letter, moreover, was not an answer from me to you, but a confronting of my arguments with yours. And if it was a fault in me to send a reply (I beseech you hear me patiently), the fault of him who insisted upon it was still greater. But let us be done with such quarrelling; let there be sincere brotherliness between us; and henceforth let us exchange letters, not of controversy, but of mutual charity. The holy brethren who with me serve the Lord send you cordial salutations. Salute from us the holy brethren who with you bear Christ's easy yoke; especially I beseech you to convey my respectful salutation to the holy father Alypius, worthy of all esteem. May Christ, our almighty God, preserve you safe, and not unmindful of me, my lord truly holy, and most blessed father. If you have read my commentary on Jonah, I think you will not recur to the ridiculous gourd-

debate. If, moreover, the friend who first assaulted me with his sword has been driven back by my pen, I rely upon your good feeling and equity to lay blame on the one who brought, and not on the one who repelled, the accusation. Let us, if you please, exercise ourselves[1] in the field of Scripture without wounding each other.

LETTER LXXXII.

(A.D. 405.)

A Reply to Letters LXXII., LXXV., and LXXXI.

TO JEROME, MY LORD BELOVED AND HONOURED IN THE BOWELS OF CHRIST, MY HOLY BROTHER AND FELLOW-PRESBYTER, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. Long ago I sent to your Charity a long letter in reply to the one which you remember sending to me by your holy son Asterius, who is now not only my brother, but also my colleague. Whether that reply reached you or not I do not know, unless I am to infer this from the words in your letter brought to me by our most sincere friend Firmus, that if the one who first assaulted you with his sword has been driven back by your pen, you rely upon my good feeling and equity to lay blame on the one who brought, not on the one who repelled, the accusation. From this one indication, though very slight, I infer that you have read my letter. In that letter I expressed indeed my sorrow that so great discord had arisen between you and Rufinus, over the strength of whose former friendship brotherly love was wont to rejoice in all parts to which the fame of it had come; but I did not in this intend to rebuke you, my brother, whom I dare not say that I have found blameable in that matter. I only lamented the sad lot of men in this world, in whose friendships, depending as they do on the continuance of mutual regard, there is no stability, however great that regard may sometimes be. I would rather, however, have been informed by your letter whether you have granted me the pardon which I begged, of which I now desire

[1] Ludamus.

you to give me more explicit assurance; although the more genial and cheerful tone of your letter seems to signify that I have obtained what I asked in mine, if indeed it was despatched after mine had been read by you, which is, as I have said, not clearly indicated.

2. You ask, or rather you give a command with the confiding boldness of charity, that we should amuse ourselves[1] in the field of Scripture without wounding each other. For my part, I am by all means disposed to exercise myself in earnest much rather than in mere amusement on such themes. If, however, you have chosen this word because of its suggesting easy exercise, let me frankly say that I desire something more from one who has, as you have, great talents under the control of a benignant disposition, together with wisdom enlightened by erudition, and whose application to study, hindered by no other distractions, is year after year impelled by enthusiasm and guided by genius: the Holy Spirit not only giving you all these advantages, but expressly charging you to come with help to those who are engaged in great and difficult investigations; not as if, in studying Scripture, they were amusing themselves on a level plain, but as men panting and toiling up a steep ascent. If, however, perchance, you selected the expression "ludamus" [let us amuse ourselves] because of the genial kindliness which befits discussion between loving friends, whether the matter debated be obvious and easy, or intricate and difficult, I beseech you to teach me how I may succeed in securing this; so that when I am dissatisfied with anything which, not through want of careful attention, but perhaps through my slowness of apprehension, has not been demonstrated to me, if I should, in attempting to make good an opposite opinion, express myself with a measure of unguarded frankness, I may not fall under the suspicion of childish conceit and forwardness, as if I sought to bring my own name into renown by assailing illustrious men;[2] and that if, when something harsh has been demanded by the exigencies of argument, I attempt to make it less hard to bear by stating it

[1] Ludamus. Letter LXXXI. On this unfortunate word of Jerome's Augustine lingers with most provoking ingenuity.

[2] See Letter LXXII. sec. 2.

in mild and courteous phrases, I may not be pronounced guilty of wielding a "honeyed sword." The only way which I can see for avoiding both these faults, or the suspicion of either of them, is to consent that when I am thus arguing with a friend more learned than myself, I must approve of everything which he says, and may not, even for the sake of more accurate information, hesitate before accepting his decisions.

3. On such terms we might amuse ourselves without fear of offending each other in the field of Scripture, but I might well wonder if the amusement was not at my expense. For I confess to your Charity that I have learned to yield this respect and honour only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error. And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the MS. is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it. As to all other writings, in reading them, however great the superiority of the authors to myself in sanctity and learning, I do not accept their teaching as true on the mere ground of the opinion being held by them; but only because they have succeeded in convincing my judgment of its truth either by means of these canonical writings themselves, or by arguments addressed to my reason. I believe, my brother, that this is your own opinion as well as mine. I do not need to say that I do not suppose you to wish your books to be read like those of prophets or of apostles, concerning which it would be wrong to doubt that they are free from error. Far be such arrogance from that humble piety and just estimate of yourself which I know you to have, and without which assuredly you would not have said, "Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning!"[1]

CHAP. II. 4. Now if, knowing as I do your life and conversation, I do not believe in regard to you that you have spoken anything with an intention of dissimulation and deceit, how much more reasonable is it for me to believe, in regard to the Apostle Paul, that he did not think one

[1] Letter LXVIII. sec. 2.

thing and affirm another when he wrote of Peter and Barnabas: "When I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, 'If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?'"[1] For whom can I confide in, as assuredly not deceiving me by spoken or written statements, if the apostle deceived his own "children," for whom he "travailed in birth again until Christ (who is the Truth) were formed in them"?[2] After having previously said to them, "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not,"[3] could he in writing to these same persons state what was not true, and deceive them by a fraud which was in some way sanctioned by expediency, when he said that he had seen Peter and Barnabas not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and that he had withstood Peter to the face because of this, that he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews?

5. But you will say it is better to believe that the Apostle Paul wrote what was not true, than to believe that the Apostle Peter did what was not right. On this principle, we must say (which far be it from us to say), that it is better to believe that the gospel history is false, than to believe that Christ was denied by Peter;[4] and better to charge the book of Kings [second book of Samuel] with false statements, than believe that so great a prophet, and one so signally chosen by the Lord God as David was, committed adultery in lusting after and taking away the wife of another, and committed such detestable homicide in procuring the death of her husband.[5] Better far that I should read with certainty and persuasion of its truth the Holy Scripture, placed on the highest (even the heavenly) pinnacle of authority, and should, without questioning the trustworthiness of its statements, learn from it that men have been either commended, or corrected, or condemned, than that, through fear of believing that by men, who, though of most praiseworthy excellence, were no more than men, actions deserving rebuke might sometimes be done,

[1] Gal. ii. 14. [2] Gal. iv. 19. [3] Ch. i. 21.
[4] Matt. xxvi. 75. [5] 2 Sam. xi. 4, 17.

I should admit suspicions affecting the trustworthiness of the whole "oracles of God."

6. The Manichæans maintain that the greater part of the Divine Scripture, by which their wicked error is in the most explicit terms confuted, is not worthy of credit, because they cannot pervert its language so as to support their opinions; yet they lay the blame of the alleged mistake not upon the apostles who originally wrote the words, but upon some unknown corrupters of the manuscripts. Forasmuch, however, as they have never succeeded in proving this by more numerous and by earlier manuscripts, or by appealing to the original language from which the Latin translations have been drawn, they retire from the arena of debate, vanquished and confounded by truth which is well known to all. Does not your holy prudence discern how great scope is given to their malice against the truth, if we say not (as they do) that the apostolic writings have been tampered with by others, but that the apostles themselves wrote what they knew to be untrue?

7. You say that it is incredible that Paul should have rebuked in Peter that which Paul himself had done. I am not at present inquiring about what Paul did, but about what he wrote. This is most pertinent to the matter which I have in hand,—namely, the confirmation of the universal and unquestionable truth of the Divine Scriptures, which have been delivered to us for our edification in the faith, not by unknown men, but by the apostles, and have on this account been received as the authoritative canonical standard. For if Peter did on that occasion what he ought to have done, Paul falsely affirmed that he saw him walking not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel. For whoever does what he ought to do, walks uprightly. He therefore is guilty of falsehood, who, knowing that another has done what he ought to have done, says that he has not done uprightly. If, then, Paul wrote what was true, it is true that Peter was not then walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel. He was therefore doing what he ought not to have done; and if Paul had himself already done something of the same kind, I would prefer to believe that, having been himself corrected, he could not omit the correction of his brother apostle, than to believe that he

put down any false statement in his epistle; and if in any epistle of Paul this would be strange, how much more in the one in the preface of which he says, "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not"!

8. For my part, I believe that Peter so acted on this occasion as to compel the Gentiles to live as Jews: because I read that Paul wrote this, and I do not believe that he lied. And therefore Peter was not acting uprightly. For it was contrary to the truth of the gospel, that those who believed in Christ should think that without those ancient ceremonies they could not be saved. This was the position maintained at Antioch by those of the circumcision who had believed; against whom Paul protested constantly and vehemently. As to Paul's circumcising of Timothy,[1] performing a vow at Cenchrea,[2] and undertaking on the suggestion of James at Jerusalem to share the performance of the appointed rites with some who had made a vow,[3] it is manifest that Paul's design in these things was not to give to others the impression that he thought that by these observances salvation is given under the Christian dispensation, but to prevent men from believing that he condemned as no better than heathen idolatrous worship, those rites which God had appointed in the former dispensation as suitable to it, and as shadows of things to come. For this is what James said to him, that the report had gone abroad concerning him that he taught men "to forsake Moses."[4] This would be by all means wrong for those who believe in Christ, to forsake him who prophesied of Christ, as if they detested and condemned the teaching of him of whom Christ said, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me."

9. For mark, I beseech you, the words of James: "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do

[1] Acts xvi. 3. [2] Acts xviii. 18. [3] Acts xxi. 26. [4] Acts xxi. 21.

therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which have believed, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication."[1] It is, in my opinion, very clear that the reason why James gave this advice was, that the falsity of what they had heard concerning him might be known to those Jews, who, though they had believed in Christ, were jealous for the honour of the law, and would not have it thought that the institutions which had been given by Moses to their fathers were condemned by the doctrine of Christ as if they were profane, and had not been originally given by divine authority. For the men who had brought this reproach against Paul were not those who understood the right spirit in which observance of these ceremonies should be practised under the Christian dispensation by believing Jews,—namely, as a way of declaring the divine authority of these rites, and their holy use in the prophetic dispensation, and not as a means of obtaining salvation, which was to them already revealed in Christ and ministered by baptism. On the contrary, the men who had spread abroad this report against the apostle were those who would have these rites observed, as if without their observance there could be no salvation to those who believed the gospel. For these false teachers had found him to be a most zealous preacher of free grace, and a most decided opponent of their views, teaching as he did that men are not justified by these things, but by the grace of Jesus Christ, which these ceremonies of the law were appointed to foreshadow. This party, therefore, endeavouring to raise odium and persecution against him, charged him with being an enemy of the law and of the divine institutions; and there was no more fitting way in which he could turn aside the odium caused by this false accusation, than by himself celebrating those rites which he

[1] Acts xxi. 20-25.

was supposed to condemn as profane, and thus showing that, on the one hand, the Jews were not to be debarred from them as if they were unlawful, and on the other hand, that the Gentiles were not to be compelled to observe them as if they were necessary.

10. For if he did in truth condemn these things in the way in which he was reported to have done, and undertook to perform these rites in order that he might, by dissembling, disguise his real sentiments, James would not have said to him, "and all shall know," but, "all shall *think* that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing;"[1] especially seeing that in Jerusalem itself the apostles had already decreed that no one should compel the Gentiles to adopt Jewish ceremonies, but had not decreed that no one should then prevent the Jews from living according to their customs, although upon them also Christian doctrine imposed no such obligation. Wherefore, if it was after the apostle's decree that Peter's dissimulation at Antioch took place, whereby he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews, which he himself was not compelled to do, although he was not forbidden to use Jewish rites in order to declare the honour of the oracles of God which were committed to the Jews;—if this, I say, were the case, was it strange that Paul should exhort him to declare freely that decree which he remembered to have framed in conjunction with the other apostles at Jerusalem?

11. If, however, as I am more inclined to think, Peter did this before the meeting of that council at Jerusalem, in that case also it is not strange that Paul wished him not to conceal timidly, but to declare boldly, a rule of practice in regard to which he already knew that they were both of the same mind; whether he was aware of this from having conferred with him as to the gospel which both preached, or from having heard that, at the calling of the centurion Cornelius, Peter had been divinely instructed in regard to this matter, or from having seen him eating with Gentile converts before those whom he feared to offend had come to Antioch. For we do not deny that Peter was already of the same opinion

[1] Acts xxi. 24.

in regard to this question as Paul himself was. Paul, therefore, was not teaching Peter what was the truth concerning that matter, but was reproving his dissimulation as a thing by which the Gentiles were compelled to act as Jews did; for no other reason than this, that the tendency of all such dissembling was to convey or confirm the impression that they taught the truth who held that believers could not be saved without circumcision and other ceremonies, which were shadows of things to come.

12. For this reason also he circumcised Timothy, lest to the Jews, and especially to his relations by the mother's side, it should seem that the Gentiles who had believed in Christ abhorred circumcision as they abhorred the worship of idols; whereas the former was appointed by God, and the latter invented by Satan. Again, he did not circumcise Titus, lest he should give occasion to those who said that believers could not be saved without circumcision, and who, in order to deceive the Gentiles, openly declared that this was the view held by Paul. This is plainly enough intimated by himself, when he says: "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."[1] .. Here we see plainly what he perceived them to be eagerly watching for, and why it was that he did not do in the case of Titus as he had done in the case of Timothy, and as he might otherwise have done in the exercise of that liberty, by which he had shown that these observances were neither to be demanded as necessary to salvation, nor denounced as unlawful.

13. You say, however, that in this discussion we must beware of affirming, with the philosophers, that some of the actions of men lie in a region between right and wrong, and are to be reckoned, accordingly, neither among good actions nor among the opposite;[2] and it is urged in your argument that the observance of legal ceremonies cannot be a thing in-

[1] Gal. ii. 3-5.

[2] See Jerome's Letter, LXXV. sec. 16, p. 293.

different, but either good or bad; so that if I affirm it to be good, I acknowledge that we also are bound to observe these ceremonies; but if I affirm it to be bad, I am bound to believe that the apostles observed them not sincerely, but in a way of dissimulation. I, for my part, would not be so much afraid of defending the apostles by the authority of philosophers, since these teach some measure of truth in their dissertations, as of pleading on their behalf the practice of advocates at the bar, in sometimes serving their clients' interests at the expense of truth. If, as is stated in your exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians, this practice of barristers may be in your opinion with propriety quoted as resembling and justifying dissimulation on the part of Peter and Paul, why should I fear to allege to you the authority of philosophers whose teaching we account worthless, not because everything which they say is false, but because they are in most things mistaken, and wherein they are found affirming truth, are notwithstanding strangers to the grace of Christ, who is the Truth?

14. But why may I not say regarding these institutions of the old economy, that they are neither good nor bad: not good, since men are not by them justified, they having been only shadows predicting the grace by which we are justified; and not bad, since they were divinely appointed as suitable both to the time and to the people? Why may I not say this, when I am supported by that saying of the prophet, that God gave unto His people "statutes that were not good"?[1] For we have in this perhaps the reason of his not calling them "bad," but calling them "not good," *i.e.* not such that either by them men could be made good, or that without them men could not possibly become good. I would esteem it a favour to be informed by your Sincerity, whether any saint, coming from the East to Rome, would be guilty of dissimulation if he fasted on the seventh day of each week, excepting the Saturday before Easter. For if we say that it is wrong to fast on the seventh day, we shall condemn not only the Church of Rome, but also many other churches, both neighbouring and more remote, in which the same custom continues to be observed. If, on the other hand, we pronounce

[1] Ezek. xx. 25.

it wrong not to fast on the seventh day, how great is our presumption in censuring so many churches in the East, and by far the greater part of the Christian world! Or do you prefer to say of this practice, that it is a thing indifferent in itself, but commendable in him who conforms with it, not as a dissembler, but from a seemly desire for the fellowship and deference for the feelings of others? No precept, however, concerning this practice is given to Christians in the canonical books. How much more, then, may I shrink from pronouncing that to be bad which I cannot deny to be of divine institution! —this fact being admitted by me in the exercise of the same faith by which I know that not through these observances, but by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, I am justified.

15. I maintain, therefore, that circumcision, and other things of this kind, were, by means of what is called the Old Testament, given to the Jews with divine authority, as signs of future things which were to be fulfilled in Christ; and that now, when these things have been fulfilled, the laws concerning these rites remained only to be read by Christians in order to their understanding the prophecies which had been given before, but not to be of necessity practised by them, as if the coming of that revelation of faith which they prefigured was still future. Although, however, these rites were not to be imposed upon the Gentiles, the compliance with them, to which the Jews had been accustomed, was not to be prohibited in such a way as to give the impression that it was worthy of abhorrence and condemnation. Therefore slowly, and by degrees, all this observance of these types was to vanish away through the power of the sound preaching of the truth of the grace of Christ, to which alone believers would be taught to ascribe their justification and salvation, and not to those types and shadows of things which till then had been future, but which were now newly come and present, as at the time of the calling of those Jews whom the personal coming of our Lord and the apostolic times had found accustomed to the observance of these ceremonial institutions. The toleration, for the time, of their continuing to observe these was enough to declare their excellence as things which, though they were

to be given up, were not, like the worship of idols, worthy of abhorrence; but they were not to be imposed upon others, lest they should be thought necessary, either as means or as conditions of salvation. This was the opinion of those heretics who, while anxious to be both Jews and Christians, could not be either the one or the other. Against this opinion you have most benevolently condescended to warn me, although I never entertained it. This also was the opinion with which, through fear, Peter fell into the fault of pretending to yield concurrence, though in reality he did not agree with it; for which reason Paul wrote most truly of him, that he saw him not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and most truly said of him that he was compelling the Gentiles to live as did the Jews. Paul did not impose this burden on the Gentiles through his sincerely complying, when it was needful, with these ceremonies, with the design of proving that they were not to be utterly condemned (as idol-worship ought to be); for he nevertheless constantly preached that not by these things, but by the grace revealed to faith, believers obtain salvation, lest he should lead any one to take up these Jewish observances as necessary to salvation. Thus, therefore, I believe that the Apostle Paul did all these things honestly, and without dissimulation; and yet if any one now leave Judaism and become a Christian, I neither compel nor permit him to imitate Paul's example, and go on with the sincere observance of Jewish rites, any more than you, who think that Paul dissembled when he practised these rites, would compel or permit such an one to follow the apostle in that dissimulation.

16. Shall I also sum up "the matter in debate, or rather your opinion concerning it"[1] (to quote your own expression)? It seems to me to be this: that after the gospel of Christ has been published, the Jews who believe do rightly if they offer sacrifices as Paul did, if they circumcise their children as Paul circumcised Timothy, and if they observe the "seventh day of the week, as the Jews have always done, provided only that they do all this as dissemblers and deceivers." If this is your doctrine, we are now precipitated, not into the

[1] See Letter LXXV. sec. 13, p. 289.

heresy of Ebion, or of those who are commonly called Nazarenes, or any other known heresy, but into some new error, which is all the more pernicious because it originates not in mistake, but in deliberate and designed endeavour to deceive. If, in order to clear yourself from the charge of entertaining such sentiments, you answer that the apostles were to be commended for dissimulation in these instances, their purpose being to avoid giving offence to the many weak Jewish believers who did not yet understand that these things were to be rejected, but that now, when the doctrine of Christ's grace has been firmly established throughout so many nations, and when, by the reading of the Law and the Prophets throughout all the churches of Christ, it is well known that these are not read for our observance, but for our instruction, any man who should propose to feign compliance with these rites would be regarded as a madman. What objection can there be to my affirming that the Apostle Paul, and other sound and faithful Christians, were bound sincerely to declare the worth of these old observances by occasionally honouring them, lest it should be thought that these institutions, originally full of prophetic significance, and cherished sacredly by their most pious forefathers, were to be abhorred by their posterity as profane inventions of the devil? For now, when the faith had come, which, previously foreshadowed by these ceremonies, was revealed after the death and resurrection of the Lord, they became, so far as their office was concerned, defunct. But just as it is seemly that the bodies of the deceased be carried honourably to the grave by their kindred, so was it fitting that these rites should be removed in a manner worthy of their origin and history, and this not with pretence of respect, but as a religious duty, instead of being forsaken at once, or cast forth to be torn in pieces by the reproaches of their enemies, as by the teeth of dogs. To carry the illustration further, if now any Christian (though he may have been converted from Judaism) were proposing to imitate the apostles in the observance of these ceremonies, like one who disturbs the ashes of those who rest, he would be not piously performing his part in the funeral obsequies, but impiously violating the sepulchre.

17. I acknowledge that in the statement contained in my letter, to the effect that the reason why Paul undertook (although he was an apostle of Christ) to perform certain rites, was that he might show that these ceremonies were not pernicious to those who desired to continue that which they had received by the Law from their fathers, I have not explicitly enough qualified the statement, by adding that this was the case *only in that time in which the grace of faith was at first revealed;* for at that time this was not pernicious. These observances were to be given up by all Christians step by step, as time advanced; not all at once, lest, if this were done, men should not perceive the difference between what God by Moses appointed to His ancient people, and the rites which the unclean spirit taught men to practise in the temples of heathen deities. I grant, therefore, that in this your censure is justifiable, and my omission deserved rebuke. Nevertheless, long before the time of my receiving your letter, when I wrote a treatise against Faustus the Manichæan, I did not omit to insert the qualifying clause which I have just stated, in a short exposition which I gave of the same passage, as you may see for yourself if you kindly condescend to read that treatise; or you may be satisfied in any other way that you please by the bearer of this letter, that I had long ago published this restriction of the general affirmation. And I now, as speaking in the sight of God, beseech you by the law of charity to believe me when I say with my whole heart, that it never was my opinion that in our time, Jews who become Christians were either required or at liberty to observe in any manner, or from any motive whatever, the ceremonies of the ancient dispensation; although I have always held, in regard to the Apostle Paul, the opinion which you call in question, from the time that I became acquainted with his writings. Nor can these two things appear incompatible to you; for you do not think that it is the duty of any one in our day to feign compliance with these Jewish observances, although you believe that the apostles did this.

18. Accordingly, as you in opposing me affirm, and, to quote your own words, "though the world were to protest against it, boldly declare that the Jewish ceremonies are to

Christians both hurtful and fatal, and that whoever observes them, whether he was originally Jew or Gentile, is on his way to the pit of perdition,"[1] I entirely indorse that statement, and add to it, "Whoever observes these ceremonies, whether he was originally Jew or Gentile, is on his way to the pit of perdition, not only if he is sincerely observing them, but also if he is observing them with dissimulation." What more do you ask? But as you draw a distinction between the dissimulation which you hold to have been practised by the apostles, and the rule of conduct befitting the present time, I do the same between the course which Paul, as I think, sincerely followed in all these examples then, and the matter of observing in our day these Jewish ceremonies, although it were done, as by him, without any dissimulation, since it was then to be approved, but is now to be abhorred. Thus, although we read that "the law and the prophets were until John,"[2] and that "therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God,"[3] and that "we have received grace for grace; for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;"[4] and although it was promised by Jeremiah that God would make a new covenant with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant which He made with their fathers;[5] nevertheless I do not think that the circumcision of our Lord by His parents was an act of dissimulation. If any one object that He did not forbid this because He was but an infant, I go on to say that I do not think that it was with intention to deceive that He said to the leper, "Offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them,"[6]—thereby adding His own precept to the authority of the law of Moses regarding that ceremonial usage. Nor was there dissimulation in His going up to the feast,[7] as there was also no desire to be seen of men; for He went up, not openly, but secretly.

19. But the words of the apostle himself may be quoted

[1] See Letter LXXV. sec. 14, p. 290.
[2] Luke xvi. 16.
[3] John v. 18.
[4] John i. 16, 17.
[5] Jer. xxxi. 31.
[6] Mark i. 44.
[7] John vii. 10.

against me: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."[1] It follows from this that he deceived Timothy, and made Christ profit him nothing, for he circumcised Timothy. Do you answer that this circumcision did Timothy no harm, because it was done with an intention to deceive? I reply that the apostle has not made any such exception. He does not say, If ye be circumcised without dissimulation, any more than, If ye be circumcised with dissimulation. He says unreservedly, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." As, therefore, you insist upon finding room for your interpretation, by proposing to supply the words, "unless it be done as an act of dissimulation," I make no unreasonable demand in asking you to permit me to understand the words, "if ye be circumcised," to be in that passage addressed to those who demanded circumcision, for this reason, that they thought it impossible for them to be otherwise saved by Christ. Whoever was then circumcised because of such persuasion and desire, and with this design, Christ assuredly profited him nothing, as the apostle elsewhere expressly affirms, "If righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain."[2] The same is affirmed in words which you have quoted: "Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you is justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."[3] His rebuke, therefore, was addressed to those who believed that they were to be justified by the law,—not to those who, knowing well the design with which the legal ceremonies were instituted as foreshadowing truth, and the time for which they were destined to be in force, observed them in order to honour Him who appointed them at first. Wherefore also he says elsewhere, "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law,"[4]—a passage from which you infer, that evidently "he has not the Holy Spirit who submits to the Law, not, as our fathers affirmed the apostles to have done, feignedly under the promptings of a wise discretion, but"—as I suppose to have been the case—"sincerely."[5]

20. It seems to me important to ascertain precisely what

[1] Gal. v. 2. [2] Gal. ii. 21. [3] Gal. v. 4. [4] Gal. v. 18.
[5] Jerome, Letter LXXV. sec. 14, p. 291.

is that submission to the law which the apostle here condemns; for I do not think that he speaks here of circumcision merely, or of the sacrifices then offered by our fathers, but now not offered by Christians, and other observances of the same nature. I rather hold that he includes also that precept of the law, "Thou shalt not covet,"[1] which we confess that Christians are unquestionably bound to obey, and which we find most fully proclaimed by the light which the Gospel has shed upon it.[2] "The law," he says, "is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good;" and then adds, "Was, then, that which is good made death unto me? God forbid." "But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good; that sin, by the commandment, might become exceeding sinful."[3] As he says here, "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful," so elsewhere, "The law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."[4] Again, in another place, after affirming, when speaking of the dispensation of grace, that grace alone justifies, he asks, "Wherefore then serveth the law?" and answers immediately, "It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom the promises were made."[5] The persons, therefore, whose submission to the law the apostle here pronounces to be the cause of their own condemnation, are those whom the law brings in guilty, as not fulfilling its requirements, and who, not understanding the efficacy of free grace, rely with self-satisfied presumption on their own strength to enable them to keep the law of God; for "love is the fulfilling of the law."[6] Now "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts," not by our own power, but "by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."[7] The satisfactory discussion of this, however, would require too long a digression, if not a separate volume. If, then, that precept of the law, "Thou shalt not covet," holds under it as guilty the man whose human weakness is not assisted by the grace

[1] Ex. xx. 17 and Deut. v. 21.
[2] Evangelica maxime illustratione prædicari.
[3] Rom. vii. 13. [4] Rom. v. 20. [5] Gal. iii. 19.
[6] Rom. xiii. 10. [7] Rom. v. 5.

of God, and instead of acquitting the sinner, condemns him as a transgressor, how much more was it impossible for those ordinances which were merely typical, circumcision and the rest, which were destined to be abolished when the revelation of grace became more widely known, to be the means of justifying any man! Nevertheless they were not on this ground to be immediately shunned with abhorrence, like the diabolical impieties of heathenism, from the first beginning of the revelation of the grace which had been by these shadows prefigured; but to be for a little while tolerated, especially among those who joined the Christian Church from that nation to whom these ordinances had been given. When, however, they had been, as it were, honourably buried, they were thenceforward to be finally abandoned by all Christians.

21. Now, as to the words which you use, "non dispensative, ut nostri voluere majores,"[1]—"not in a way justifiable by expediency, the ground on which our fathers were disposed to explain the conduct of the apostles,"—pray what do these words mean? Surely nothing else than that which I call "officiosum mendacium," the liberty granted by expediency being equivalent to a call of duty to utter a falsehood with pious intention. I at least can see no other explanation, unless, of course, the mere addition of the words "permitted by expediency" be enough to make a lie cease to be a lie; and if this be absurd, why do you not openly say that a lie spoken in the way of duty[2] is to be defended? Perhaps the name offends you, because the word "officium" is not common in ecclesiastical books; but this did not deter our Ambrose from its use, for he has chosen the title "De Officiis" for some of his books that are full of useful rules. Do you mean to say, that whoever utters a lie from a sense of duty is to be blamed, and whoever does the same on the ground of expediency is to be approved? I beseech you, consider that the man who thinks this may lie whenever he thinks fit, because this involves the whole important question whether to say what is false be at any time the duty of a good man, especially of a Christian man, to whom it has been said, "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into

[1] Letter LXXV. sec. 14, p. 291. [2] Mendacium officiosum.

condemnation,"[1] and who believes the Psalmist's word, "Thou wilt destroy all them that speak lies."[2]

22. This, however, is, as I have said, another and a weighty question; I leave him who is of this opinion to judge for himself the circumstances in which he is at liberty to utter a lie: provided, however, that it be most assuredly believed and maintained that this way of lying is far removed from the authors who were employed to write holy writings, especially the canonical Scriptures; lest those who are the stewards of Christ, of whom it is said, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful,"[3] should seem to have proved their fidelity by learning as an important lesson to speak what is false when this is expedient for the truth's sake, although the word fidelity itself, in the Latin tongue, is said to signify originally a real correspondence between what is said and what is done.[4] Now, where that which is spoken is actually done, there is assuredly no room for falsehood. Paul therefore, as a "faithful steward," doubtless is to be regarded as approving his fidelity in his writings; for he was a steward of truth, not of falsehood. Therefore he wrote the truth when he wrote that he had seen Peter walking not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and that he had withstood him to the face because he was compelling the Gentiles to live as the Jews did. And Peter himself received, with the holy and loving humility which became him, the rebuke which Paul, in the interests of truth, and with the boldness of love, administered. Therein Peter left to those that came after him an example, that, if at any time they deviated from the right path, they should not think it beneath them to accept correction from those who were their juniors,—an example more rare, and requiring greater piety, than that which Paul's conduct on the same occasion left us, that those who are younger should have courage even to withstand their seniors if the defence of evangelical truth required it, yet in such a way as to preserve unbroken brotherly love. For while it is better for one to succeed in

[1] Jas. v. 12; Matt. v. 37. [2] Ps. v. 6. [3] 1 Cor. iv. 2.

[4] Cum ipsa fides in latino sermone ab eo dicatur appellata quia fit quod dicitur.

perfectly keeping the right path, it is a thing much more worthy of admiration and praise to receive admonition meekly, than to admonish a transgressor boldly. On that occasion, therefore, Paul was to be praised for upright courage, Peter was to be praised for holy humility; and so far as my judgment enables me to form an opinion, this ought rather to have been asserted in answer to the calumnies of Porphyry, than further occasion given to him for finding fault, by putting it in his power to bring against Christians this much more damaging accusation, that either in writing their letters or in complying with the ordinances of God they practised deceit.

CHAP. III. 23. You call upon me to bring forward the name of even one whose opinion I have followed in this matter, and at the same time you have quoted the names of many who have held before you the opinion which you defend.[1] You also say that if I censure you for an error in this, you beg to be allowed to remain in error in company with such great men. I have not read their writings; but although they are only six or seven in all, you have yourself impugned the authority of four of them. For as to the Laodicean author,[2] whose name you do not give, you say that he has lately forsaken the Church; Alexander you describe as a heretic of old standing; and as to Origen and Didymus, I read in some of your more recent works, censure passed on their opinions, and that in no measured terms, nor in regard to insignificant questions, although formerly you gave Origen marvellous praise. I suppose, therefore, that you would not even yourself be contented to be in error with these men; although the language which I refer to is equivalent to an assertion that in this matter they have not erred. For who is there that would consent to be knowingly mistaken, with whatever company he might share his errors? Three of the seven therefore alone remain, Eusebius of Emesa, Theodorus of Heraclea, and John, whom you afterwards mention, who formerly presided as pontiff over the Church of Constantinople.

24. However, if you inquire or recall to memory the

[1] Jerome's Letter, LXXV. sec. 6, p. 282. [2] *Ibid.* sec. 4, p. 280.

opinion of our Ambrose,[1] and also of our Cyprian,[2] on the point in question, you will perhaps find that I also have not been without some whose footsteps I follow in that which I have maintained. At the same time, as I have said already, it is to the canonical Scriptures alone that I am bound to yield such implicit subjection as to follow their teaching, without admitting the slightest suspicion that in them any mistake or any statement intended to mislead could find a place. Wherefore, when I look round for a third name that I may oppose three on my side to your three, I might indeed easily find one, I believe, if my reading had been extensive; but one occurs to me whose name is as good as all these others, nay, of greater authority—I mean the Apostle Paul himself. To him I betake myself; to himself I appeal from the verdict of all those commentators on his writings who advance an opinion different from mine. I interrogate him, and demand from himself to know whether he wrote what was true, or under some plea of expediency wrote what he knew to be false, when he wrote that he saw Peter not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and withstood him to his face because by that dissimulation he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews. And I hear him in reply proclaiming with a solemn oath in an earlier part of the epistle, where he began this narration, "The things that I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not."[3]

25. Let those who think otherwise, however great their names, excuse my differing from them. The testimony of so great an apostle using, in his own writings, an oath as a confirmation of their truth, is of more weight with me than the opinion of any man, however learned, who is discussing the writings of another. Nor am I afraid lest men should say that, in vindicating Paul from the charge of pretending to conform to the errors of Jewish prejudice, I affirm him to have actually so conformed. For as, on the one hand, he was not guilty of pretending conformity to error when, with the liberty of an apostle, such as was suitable to that period of

[1] In his Commentary on Galatians.
[2] In his letter, LXX., to Quintus; Clark's *Ante-Nicene Library*, vol. i. p. 255.
[3] Gal. i. 20.

transition, he did, by practising those ancient holy ordinances, when it was necessary to declare their original excellence as appointed not by the wiles of Satan to deceive men, but by the wisdom of God for the purpose of typically foretelling things to come; so, on the other hand, he was not guilty of real conformity to the errors of Judaism, seeing that he not only knew, but also preached constantly and vehemently, that those were in error who thought that these ceremonies were to be imposed upon the Gentile converts, or were necessary to the justification of any who believed.

26. Moreover, as to my saying that to the Jews he became as a Jew, and to the Gentiles as a Gentile, not with the subtlety of intentional deceit, but with the compassion of pitying love,[1] it seems to me that you have not sufficiently considered my meaning in the words; or rather, perhaps, I have not succeeded in making it plain. For I did not mean by this that I supposed him to have practised in either case a feigned conformity; but I said it because his conformity was sincere, not less in the things in which he became to the Jews as a Jew, than in those in which he became to the Gentiles as a Gentile,—a parallel which you yourself suggested, and by which I thankfully acknowledge that you have materially assisted my argument. For when I had in my letter asked you to explain how it could be supposed that Paul's becoming to the Jews as a Jew involved the supposition that he must have acted deceitfully in conforming to the Jewish observances, seeing that no such deceptive conformity to heathen customs was involved in his becoming as a Gentile to the Gentiles; your answer was, that his becoming to the Gentiles as a Gentile meant no more than his receiving the uncircumcised, and permitting the free use of those meats which were pronounced unclean by Jewish law. If, then, when I ask whether in this also he practised dissimulation, such an idea is repudiated as palpably most absurd and false: it is an obvious inference, that in his performing those things in which he became as a Jew to the Jews, he was using a wise liberty, not yielding to a degrading compulsion, nor doing what would be still more unworthy of him,

[1] Letter XL. sec. 4, p. 132; quoted also by Jerome, LXXV. sec. 12, p. 288.

viz. stooping from integrity to fraud out of a regard to expediency.

27. For to believers, and to those who know the truth, as the apostle testifies (unless here too, perhaps, he is deceiving his readers), "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."[1] Therefore to Paul himself, not only as a man, but as a steward eminently faithful, not only as knowing, but also as a teacher of the truth, every creature of God which is used for food was not feignedly but truly good. If, then, to the Gentiles he became as a Gentile, by holding and teaching the truth concerning meats and circumcision, although he feigned no conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the Gentiles, why say that it was impossible for him to become as a Jew to the Jews, unless he practised dissimulation in performing the rites of their religion? Why did he maintain the true faithfulness of a steward towards the wild olive branch that was engrafted, and yet hold up a strange veil of dissimulation, on the plea of expediency, before those who were the natural and original branches of the olive tree? Why was it that, in becoming as a Gentile to the Gentiles, his teaching and his conduct[2] are in harmony with his real sentiments; but that, in becoming as a Jew to the Jews, he shuts up one thing in his heart, and declares something wholly different in his words, deeds, and writings? But far be it from us to entertain such thoughts of him. To both Jews and Gentiles he owed "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned;"[3] and therefore he became all things to all men, that he might gain all,[4] not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one filled with compassion; that is to say, not by pretending himself to do all the evil things which other men did, but by using the utmost pains to minister with all compassion the remedies required by the evils under which other men laboured, as if their case had been his own.

28. When, therefore, he did not refuse to practise some of these Old Testament observances, he was not led by his com-

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 4.

[2] We follow here the reading of fourteen MSS., "agit" instead of "ait."

[3] 1 Tim. i. 5.

[4] 1 Cor. ix. 19–22.

passion for Jews to feign this conformity, but unquestionably was acting sincerely; and by this course of action declaring his respect for those things which in the former dispensation had been for a time enjoined by God, he distinguished between them and the impious rites of heathenism. At that time, moreover, not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one moved by compassion, he became to the Jews as a Jew, when, seeing them to be in error, which either made them unwilling to believe in Christ, or made them think that by these old sacrifices and ceremonial observances they could be cleansed from sin and made partakers of salvation, he desired so to deliver them from that error as if he saw not them, but himself, entangled in it; thus truly loving his neighbour as himself, and doing to others as he would have others do to him if he required their help,—a duty to the statement of which our Lord added these words, "This is the law and the prophets."[1]

29. This compassionate affection Paul recommends in the same Epistle to the Galatians, saying: "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."[2] See whether he has not said, "Make thyself as he is, that thou mayest gain him." Not, indeed, that one should commit or pretend to have committed the same fault as the one who has been overtaken, but that in the fault of that other he should consider what might happen to himself, and so compassionately render assistance to that other, as he would wish that other to do to him if the case were his; that is, not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one filled with compassion. Thus, whatever the error or fault in which Jew or Gentile or any man was found by Paul, to all men he became all things,—not by feigning what was not true, but by feeling, because the case might have been his own, the compassion of one who put himself in the other's place,—that he might gain all.

CHAP. IV. 30. I beseech you to look, if you please, for a little into your own heart,—I mean, into your own heart as it stands affected towards myself,—and recall, or if you

[1] Matt. vii. 12. [2] Gal. vi. 2.

have it in writing beside you, read again, your own words in that letter (only too brief) which you sent to me by Cyprian our brother, now my colleague. Read with what sincere brotherly and loving earnestness you have added to a serious complaint of what I had done to you these words: "In this friendship is wounded, and the laws of brotherly union are set at naught. Let not the world see us quarrelling like children, and giving material for angry contention between those who may become our respective supporters or adversaries."[1] These words I perceive to be spoken by you from the heart, and from a heart kindly seeking to give me good advice. Then you add, what would have been obvious to me even without your stating it: "I write what I have now written, because I desire to cherish towards you pure and Christian love, and not to hide in my heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of my lips." O pious man, beloved by me, as God who seeth my soul is witness, with a true heart I believe your statement; and just as I do not question the sincerity of the profession which you have thus made in a letter to me, so do I by all means believe the Apostle Paul when he makes the very same profession in his letter, addressed not to any one individual, but to Jews and Greeks, and all those Gentiles who were his children in the gospel, for whose spiritual birth he travailed, and after them to so many thousands of believers in Christ, for whose sake that letter has been preserved. I believe, I say, that he did not "hide in his heart anything which did not agree with the utterance of his lips."

31. You have indeed yourself done towards me this very thing,—becoming to me as I am,—"not with the subtlety of deception, but with the love of compassion," when you thought that it behoved you to take as much pains to prevent me from being left in a mistake, in which you believed me to be, as you would have wished another to take for your deliverance if the case had been your own. Wherefore, gratefully acknowledging this evidence of your goodwill towards me, I also claim that you also be not displeased with me, if, when anything in your treatises disquieted me, I acquainted you with my distress, desiring the same course to be followed by all

[1] Letter LXXII. sec. 4.

towards me as I have followed towards you, that whatever they think worthy of censure in my writings, they would neither flatter me with deceitful commendation nor blame me before others for that of which they are silent towards myself; thereby, as it seems to me, more seriously "wounding friendship and setting at nought the laws of brotherly union." For I would hesitate to give the name of Christian to those friendships in which the common proverb, "Flattery makes friends, and truth makes enemies,"[1] is of more authority than the scriptural proverb, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."[2]

32. Wherefore let us rather do our utmost to set before our beloved friends, who most cordially wish us well in our labours, such an example that they may know that it is possible for the most intimate friends to differ so much in opinion, that the views of the one may be contradicted by the other without any diminution of their mutual affection, and without hatred being kindled by that truth which is due to genuine friendship, whether the contradiction be in itself in accordance with truth, or at least, whatever its intrinsic value is, be spoken from a sincere heart by one who is resolved not "to hide in his heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of his lips." Let therefore our brethren, your friends, of whom you bear testimony that they are vessels of Christ, believe me when I say that it was wholly against my will that my letter came into the hands of many others before it reached your own, and that my heart is filled with no small sorrow for this mistake. How it happened would take long to tell, and this is now, if I am not mistaken, unnecessary; since, if my word is to be taken at all in regard to this, it suffices for me to say that it was not done by me with the sinister intention which is supposed by some, and that it was not by my wish, or arrangement, or consent, or design that this has taken place. If they do not believe this, which I affirm in the sight of God, I can do no more to satisfy them. Far be it, however, from me to believe that they made this suggestion to your Holiness with the malicious desire to kindle enmity between you and me, from which may God in His

[1] Terence, *Andria*, Act i. Sc. 1. [2] Prov. xxvii. 6.

mercy defend us! Doubtless, without any intention of doing me wrong, they readily suspected me, as a man, to be capable of failings common to human nature. For it is right for me to believe this concerning them, if they be vessels of Christ appointed not to dishonour, but to honour, and made meet by God for every good work in His great house.[1] If, however, this my solemn protestation come to their knowledge, and they still persist in the same opinion of my conduct, you will yourself see that in this they will do wrong.

33. As to my having written that I had never sent to Rome a book against you, I wrote this because, in the first place, I did not regard the name "book" as applicable to my letter, and therefore was under the impression that you had heard of something else entirely different from it; in the second place, I had not sent the letter in question to Rome, but to you; and in the third place, I did not consider it to be against you, because I knew that I had been prompted by the sincerity of friendship, which should give liberty for the exchange of suggestions and corrections between us. Leaving out of sight for a little your friends of whom I have spoken, I implore yourself, by the grace whereby we have been redeemed, not to suppose that I have been guilty of artful flattery in anything which I have said in my letters concerning the good gifts which have been by the Lord's goodness bestowed on you. If, however, I have in anything wronged you, forgive me. As to that incident in the life of some forgotten bard, which, with perhaps more pedantry than good taste, I quoted from classic literature, I beg you not to carry the application of it to yourself further than my words warranted; for I immediately added: "I do not say this in order that you may recover the faculty of spiritual sight—far be it from me to say that you have lost it!—but that, having eyes both clear and quick in discernment, you may turn them to this matter."[2] I thought a reference to that incident suitable exclusively in connection with the *παλινῳδία*, in which we ought all to imitate Stesichorus if we have written anything which it becomes our duty to correct in a writing of later date, and not at all in connection with the blindness of Stesichorus, which

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21.

[2] Letter XL. sec. 7, p. 134.

I neither ascribed to your mind, nor feared as likely to befall you. And again, I beseech you to correct boldly whatever you see needful to censure in my writings. For although, so far as the titles of honour which prevail in the Church are concerned, a bishop's rank is above that of a presbyter, nevertheless in many things Augustine is inferior to Jerome; albeit correction is not to be refused nor despised, even when it comes from one who in all respects may be an inferior.

CHAP. V. 34. As to your translation, you have now convinced me of the benefits to be secured by your proposal to translate the Scriptures from the original Hebrew, in order that you may bring to light those things which have been either omitted or perverted by the Jews. But I beg you to be so good as state by what Jews this has been done, whether by those who before the Lord's advent translated the Old Testament—and if so, by what one or more of them—or by the Jews of later times, who may be supposed to have mutilated or corrupted the Greek MSS., in order to prevent themselves from being unable to answer the evidence given by these concerning the Christian faith. I cannot find any reason which should have prompted the earlier Jewish translators to such unfaithfulness. I beg of you, moreover, to send us your translation of the Septuagint, which I did not know that you had published. I am also longing to read that book of yours which you named *De optimo genere interpretandi*, and to know from it how to adjust the balance between the product of the translator's acquaintance with the original language, and the conjectures of those who are able commentators on the Scripture, who, notwithstanding their common loyalty to the one true faith, must often bring forward various opinions on account of the obscurity of many passages;[1] although this difference of interpretation by no means involves departure from the unity of the faith; just as one commentator may himself give, in harmony with the faith which he holds, two different interpretations of the same passage, because the obscurity of the passage makes both equally admissible.

35. I desire, moreover, your translation of the Septuagint,

[1] An important sentence, as indicating the estimation in which Augustine held the "consensus patrum" as an authority in the interpretation of Scripture.

in order that we may be delivered, so far as is possible, from the consequences of the notable incompetency of those who, whether qualified or not, have attempted a Latin translation; and in order that those who think that I look with jealousy on your useful labours, may at length, if it be possible, perceive that my only reason for objecting to the public reading of your translation from the Hebrew in our churches was, lest, bringing forward anything which was, as it were, new and opposed to the authority of the Septuagint version, we should trouble by serious cause of offence the flocks of Christ, whose ears and hearts have become accustomed to listen to that version to which the seal of approbation was given by the apostles themselves. Wherefore, as to that shrub in the book of Jonah,[1] if in the Hebrew it is neither "gourd" nor "ivy," but something else which stands erect, supported by its own stem without other props, I would prefer to call it "gourd" in all our Latin versions; for I do not think that the Seventy would have rendered it thus at random, had they not known that the plant was something like a gourd.

36. I think I have now given a sufficient answer (perhaps more than sufficient) to your three letters; of which I received two by Cyprian, and one by Firmus. In replying, send whatever you think likely to be of use in instructing me and others. And I shall take more care, as the Lord may help me, that any letter which I may write to you shall reach yourself before it falls into the hand of any other, by whom its contents may be published abroad; for I confess that I would not like any letter of yours to me to meet with the fate of which you justly complain as having befallen my letter to you. Let us, however, resolve to maintain between ourselves the liberty as well as the love of friends; so that in the letters which we exchange, neither of us shall be restrained from frankly stating to the other whatever seems to him open to correction, provided always that this be done in the spirit which does not, as inconsistent with brotherly love, displease God. If, however, you do not think that this can be done between us without endangering that brotherly love, let us not do it: for the love which I should like to see maintained

[1] Ch. iv. 6.

between us is assuredly the greater love which would make this mutual freedom possible; but the smaller measure of it is better than none at all.[1]

LETTER LXXXIII.

(A.D. 405.)

TO MY LORD ALYPIUS MOST BLESSED, MY BROTHER AND COLLEAGUE, BELOVED AND LONGED FOR WITH SINCERE VENERATION, AND TO THE BRETHREN THAT ARE WITH HIM, AUGUSTINE AND THE BRETHREN WITH HIM SEND GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. THE sorrow of the members of the Church at Thiave prevents my heart from having any rest until I hear that they have been brought again to be of the same mind towards you as they formerly were; which must be accomplished without delay. For if the apostle was concerned about one individual, "lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow," adding in the same context the words, "lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices,"[2] how much more does it become us to act with caution, lest we cause similar grief to a whole flock, and especially one composed of persons who have lately been reconciled to the Catholic Church, and whom I can upon no account forsake! As, however, the short time at our disposal did not permit us so to take counsel together as to arrive at a mature and satisfactory decision, may it please your Holiness to accept in this letter the finding which commended itself most to me when I had long reflected upon the matter since we parted; and if you approve of it, let the enclosed letter,[3]

[1] It is interesting to know that Jerome afterwards admitted the soundness of the view so ably and reasonably defended by Augustine in this letter concerning the rebuke of Peter at Antioch. In Letter CLXXX., addressed to Oceanus, we have these words: "This question the venerable Father Jerome and I have discussed fully in letters which we exchanged; and in the last work which he has published against Pelagius, under the name of *Critobulus*, he has maintained the same opinion concerning that event, and the sayings of the apostles, as I myself had adopted, following the blessed Cyprian." See Jerome, book i., against the Pelagians and Cyprian, Letter LXX., to Quintus.

[2] 2 Cor. ii. 7, 11.

[3] This letter has not been preserved.

which I have written to them in the name of both of us, be sent to them without delay.

2. You proposed that they should have the one half [of the property left by Honoratus], and that the other half should be made up to them by me from such resources as might be at my disposal. I think, however, that if the whole property had been taken from them, men might reasonably have said that we had taken the great pains in this matter which we have done, for the sake of justice, not for pecuniary advantage. But when we concede to them one half, and in that way settle with them by a compromise, it will be manifest that our anxiety has been only about the money; and you see what harm must follow from this. For, on the one hand, we shall be regarded by them as having taken away one half of a property to which we had no claim; and, on the other hand, they will be regarded by us as dishonourably and unjustly consenting to accept aid from one half of a property of which the whole belonged to the poor. For your remark, "We must beware lest, in our efforts to obtain a right adjustment of a difficult question, we cause more serious wounds," applies with no less force if the half be conceded to them. For those whose turning from the world to monastic life we desire to secure, will, for the sake of this half of their private estates, be disposed to find some excuse for putting off the sale of these, in order that their case may be dealt with according to this precedent. Moreover, would it not be strange, if, in a question like this, where much may be said on both sides, a whole community should, through our not avoiding the appearance of evil, be offended by the impression that their bishops, whom they hold in high esteem, are smitten with sordid avarice?

3. For when any one is turned to adopt the life of a monk, if he is adopting it with a true heart, he does not think of that which I have just mentioned, especially if he be admonished of the sinfulness of such conduct. But if he be a deceiver, and is seeking "his own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ's,"[1] he has not charity; and without this, what does it profit him, "though he bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and though he give his body to be burned"?[2]

[1] Phil. ii. 21. [2] 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

Moreover, as we agreed when conversing together, this may be henceforth avoided, and an arrangement made with each individual who is disposed to enter a monastery, if he cannot be admitted to the society of the brethren before he has relieved himself of all these encumbrances, and comes as one at leisure from all business, because the property which belonged to him has ceased to be his. But there is no other way in which this spiritual death of weak brethren, and grievous obstacle to the salvation of those for whose reconciliation with the Catholic Church we so earnestly labour, can be avoided, than by our giving them most clearly to understand that we are by no means anxious about money in such cases as this. And this they cannot be made to understand, unless we leave to their use the estate which they always supposed to belong to their late presbyter; because, even if it was not his, they ought to have known this from the beginning.

4. It seems to me, therefore, that in matters of this kind, the rule which ought to hold is, that whatever belonged, according to the ordinary civil laws regarding property, to him who is an ordained clergyman in any place, belongs after his death to the Church over which he was ordained. Now, by civil law, the property in question belonged to the presbyter Honoratus; so that not only on account of his being ordained elsewhere, but even had he remained in the monastery of Thagaste, if he had died without having either sold his estate or handed it over by express deed of gift to any one, the right of succession to it would belong only to his heirs: as brother Æmilianus inherited those thirty shillings[1] left by the brother Privatus. This, therefore, behoved to be considered and provided for in time; but if no provision was made for it, we must, in the disposal of the estate, comply with the laws which have been appointed to regulate in civil society the holding or not holding of property; that we may, so far as is in our power, abstain not only from the reality, but also from all appearance of evil, and preserve that good name which is so necessary to our office as stewards. How truly this procedure has the appearance of evil, I beseech your wisdom to observe. For having heard of their sorrow, which we ourselves wit-

[1] Solidi.

nessed at Thiave, fearing lest, as frequently happens, I should myself be mistaken through partiality for my own opinion, I stated the facts of the case to our brother and colleague Samsucius, without telling him at the time my present view of the matter, but rather stating the view taken up by both of us when we were resisting their demands. He was exceedingly shocked, and wondered that we had entertained such a view; being moved by nothing else but the ugly appearance of the transaction, as one wholly unworthy not only of us, but of any man.

5. Wherefore I implore you to subscribe and transmit without delay the letter which I have written to them in name of both of us. And even if, perchance, you discern the other course to be a just one in the matter, let not these brethren who are weak be compelled to learn now what I myself cannot understand; rather let this word of the Lord be remembered in dealing with them: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."[1] For He Himself, out of condescension to such weakness, said on another occasion (it was in reference to the payment of tribute), "Then are the children free; notwithstanding lest we offend them," etc.; and sent Peter to pay the didrachmæ which were then exacted.[2] For He knew another law according to which He was not bound to make any such payment; but He made the payment which was imposed upon Him by that law according to which, as I have said, succession to the estate of Honoratus behoved to be regulated, if he died before either giving away or selling his property. Nay, even in regard to the law of the Church, Paul showed forbearance towards the weak, and did not insist upon his receiving the money due to him, although fully persuaded in his conscience that he might with perfect justice insist upon it; waiving his claim, however, only because he thereby avoided a suspicion of his motives which would mar the sweet savour of Christ among them, and abstained from the appearance of evil in a region in which he knew that this was his duty, and probably even before he had known by experience the sorrow which it would occasion. Let us now, though we are somewhat behindhand, and have

[1] John xvi. 12. [2] Matt. xvii. 26, 27.

been admonished by experience, correct that which we ought to have foreseen.

6. I remember that you proposed when we parted that the brethren at Thagaste should hold me responsible to make up the half of the sum claimed; let me say in conclusion, that as I fear everything which may make my attempt unsuccessful, if you clearly perceive that proposal to be a just one, I do not refuse to comply with it, on this condition, however, that I am to pay the amount only when I have it in my power, *i.e.* when something so considerable falls to our monastery at Hippo that this can be done without unduly straitening us,—the amount remaining after the subtraction of so large a sum being still such as to provide for our monastery here an equal share in proportion to the number of resident brethren.

LETTER LXXXIV.

(A.D. 405.)

TO MY LORD NOVATUS, MOST BLESSED, MY BROTHER AND PARTNER IN THE PRIESTLY OFFICE, ESTEEMED AND LONGED FOR, AND TO THE BRETHREN WHO ARE WITH HIM, AUGUSTINE AND THE BRETHREN WITH HIM SEND GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. I MYSELF feel how hard-hearted I must appear to you, and I can scarcely excuse to myself my conduct in not consenting to send to your Holiness my son the deacon Lucillus, your own brother. But when your own time comes to surrender to the claims of Churches in remote places some of those whom you have educated, and who are most dear and sweet to you, then, and not till then, will you know the pangs of longing which pierce me through and through for some who, once united to me in the strongest and most pleasing intimacy, are no more beside me. Let me submit to your thoughts the case of one who is far away. However strong be the bond of kindred between brothers, it does not surpass the bond by which my brother Severus and I are united to each other, and yet you know how rarely I have the happiness of seeing him. And this has been caused neither by his wish nor by mine, but because of our giving to the claims

bound to weep that a greater number are being by you scattered from the Church. For you have so wounded the Church of Hippo,[1] that unless the Lord make you disengage yourself from all secular cares and burdens, and recall you to the manner of living and deportment which become the true bishop, the wound may soon be beyond remedy.

2. Seeing, however, that you continue to involve yourself more and more deeply in these affairs, and have, notwithstanding your vow of renunciation, entangled yourself again with the things which you had solemnly laid aside,—a step which could not be justified even by the laws of ordinary human affairs; seeing also that you are reported to be living in a style of extravagance which cannot be maintained by the slender income of your church,—why do you insist upon communion with me, while you refuse to hear my rebuke of your faults? Is it that men whose complaints I cannot bear, may justly blame me for whatever you do? You are, moreover, mistaken in suspecting that those who find fault with you are persons who have always been against you even in your earlier life. It is not so: and you have no reason to be surprised that many things escape your observation. But even were this the case, it is your duty to secure that they find nothing in your conduct which they might reasonably blame, and for which they might bring reproach against the Church. Perhaps you think that my reason for saying these things is, that I have not accepted what you urged in your defence. Nay, rather my reason is, that if I were to say nothing regarding these things, I would be guilty of that for which I could urge nothing in my defence before God. I know your abilities; but even a man of dull mind is kept from disquietude if he sets his affections on heavenly things, whereas a man of acute mind has this gift in vain if he set his affections on earthly things. The office of a bishop is not designed to enable one to spend a life of vanity. The Lord God, who has closed against you all the ways by which you were disposed to make Him minister to your gain, in order that He may guide you, if you but understand Him, into that way, with a view to the pursuit of which that holy respon-

[1] Cataqua (?).

sibility was laid upon you, will Himself teach you what I now say.

LETTER LXXXVI.

(A.D. 405.)

TO MY NOBLE LORD CÆCILIANUS, MY SON TRULY AND JUSTLY HONOURABLE AND ESTEEMED IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST, AUGUSTINE, BISHOP, SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

THE renown of your administration and the fame of your virtues, as well as the praiseworthy zeal and faithful sincerity of your Christian piety,—gifts of God which make you rejoice in Him from whom they came, and from whom you hope to receive yet greater things,—have moved me to acquaint your Excellency by this letter with the cares which agitate my mind. As our joy is great that throughout the rest of Africa you have taken measures with remarkable success on behalf of Catholic unity, our sorrow is proportionately great because the district of Hippo[1] and the neighbouring regions on the borders of Numidia have not enjoyed the benefit of the vigour with which as a magistrate you have enforced your proclamation, my noble lord, and my son truly and justly honourable and esteemed in the love of Christ. Lest this should be regarded rather as due to the neglect of duty by me who bear the burden of the episcopal office at Hippo, I have considered myself bound to mention it to your Excellency. If you condescend to acquaint yourself with the extremities to which the effrontery of the heretics has proceeded in the region of Hippo, as you may do by questioning my brethren and colleagues, who are able to furnish your Excellency with information, or the presbyter whom I have sent with this letter, I am sure you will so deal with this tumour of impious presumption, that it shall be healed by warning rather than painfully removed afterwards by punishment.

[1] Regionem Hipponensium Regiorum.

LETTER LXXXVII.

(A.D. 405.)

TO HIS BROTHER EMERITUS, BELOVED AND LONGED FOR, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. I KNOW that it is not on the possession of good talents and a liberal education that the salvation of the soul depends; but when I hear of any one who is thus endowed holding a different view from that which truth imperatively insists upon on a point which admits of very easy examination, the more I wonder at such a man, the more I burn with desire to make his acquaintance, and to converse with him; or if that be impossible, I long to bring his mind and mine into contact by exchanging letters, which wing their flight even between places far apart. As I have heard that you are such a man as I have spoken of, I grieve that you should be severed and shut out from the Catholic Church, which is spread abroad throughout the whole world, as was foretold by the Holy Spirit. What your reason for this separation is I do not know. For it is not disputed that the party of Donatus is wholly unknown to a great part of the Roman world, not to speak of the barbarian nations (to whom also the apostle said that he was a debtor[1]) whose communion in the Christian faith is joined with ours, and that in fact they do not even know at all when or upon what account the dissension began. Now, unless you admit these Christians to be innocent of those crimes with which you charge the Christians of Africa, you must confess that all of you are defiled by participation in the wicked actions of all worthless characters, so long as they succeed (to put the matter mildly) in escaping detection among you. For you do occasionally expel a member from your communion, in which case his expulsion takes place only after he has committed the crime for which he merited expulsion. Is there not some intervening time during which he escapes detection before he is discovered, convicted, and condemned by you? I ask, therefore, whether he involved you in his defilement so long as he was not discovered by

[1] Rom. i. 14.

you? You answer, "By no means." If, then, he were not to be discovered at all, he would in that case never involve you in his defilement; for it sometimes happens that the crimes committed by men come to light only after their death, yet this does not bring guilt upon those Christians who communicated with them while they were alive. Why, then, have you severed yourselves by so rash and profane schism from the communion of innumerable Eastern Churches, in which all that you truly or falsely affirm to have been done in Africa has been and still is utterly unknown?

2. For it is quite another question whether or not there be truth in the assertions made by you. These assertions we disprove by documents much more worthy of credit than those which you bring forward, and we further find in your own documents more abundant proof of those positions which you assail. But this is, as I have said, another question altogether, to be taken up and discussed when necessary. Meanwhile, let your mind give special attention to this: that no one can be involved in the guilt of unknown crimes committed by persons unknown to him. Whence it is manifest that you have been guilty of impious schism in separating yourselves from the communion of the whole world, to which the things charged, whether truly or falsely, by you against some men in Africa have been and still are wholly unknown; although this also should not be forgotten, that even when known and discovered, bad men do not harm the good who are in a Church, if either the power of restraining them from communion be wanting, or the interests of the Church's peace forbid this to be done. For who were those who, according to the prophet Ezekiel,[1] obtained the reward of being marked before the destruction of the wicked, and of escaping unhurt when they were destroyed, but those who sighed and cried for the sins and iniquities of the people of God which were done in the midst of them? Now who sighs and cries for that which is unknown to him? On the same principle, the Apostle Paul bears with false brethren. For it is not of persons unknown to him that he says, "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's;" yet these persons he

[1] Ch. ix. 4–6.

shows plainly to have been beside him. And to what class do the men belong who have chosen rather to burn incense to idols or surrender the divine books than to suffer death, if not to those who "seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ"?

3. I omit many proofs which I might give from Scripture, that I may not make this letter longer than is needful; and I leave many more things to be considered by yourself in the light of your own learning. But I beseech you mark this, which is quite enough to decide the whole question: If so many transgressors in the one nation, which was then the Church of God, did not make those who were associated with them to be guilty like themselves; if that multitude of false brethren did not make the Apostle Paul, who was a member of the same Church with them, a seeker not of the things of Jesus Christ, but of his own,—it is manifest that a man is not made wicked by the wickedness of any one with whom he goes to the altar of Christ, even though he be not unknown to him, provided only that he do not encourage him in his wickedness, but by a good conscience disallowing his conduct keep himself apart from him. It is therefore obvious that, to be art and part with a thief, one must either help him in the theft, or receive with approbation what he has stolen. This I say in order to remove out of the way endless and unnecessary questions concerning the conduct of men, which are wholly irrelevant when advanced against our position.

4. If, however, you do not agree with what I have said, you involve the whole of your party in the reproach of being such men as Optatus was, while, notwithstanding your knowledge of his crimes, he was tolerated in communion with you; and far be it from me to say this of such a man as Emeritus, and of others of like integrity among you, who are, I am sure, wholly averse to such deeds as disgraced him. For we do not lay any charge against you but the one of schism, which by your obstinate persistence in it you have now made heresy. How great this crime is in the judgment of God Himself, you may see by reading what without doubt you have read ere now. You will find that Dathan and Abiram were swallowed up by an opening of the earth beneath them,[1] and that

[1] Num. xvi. 31-35.

all the others who had conspired with them were devoured by fire breaking forth in the midst of them. As a warning to men to shun this crime, the Lord God signalized its commission with this immediate punishment, that He might show what He reserves for the final recompense of persons guilty of a similar transgression, whom His great forbearance spares for a time. We do not, indeed, find fault with the reasons by which you excuse your tolerating Optatus among you. We do not blame you, because at the time when he was denounced for his furious conduct in the mad abuse of power, when he was impeached by the groans of all Africa,—groans in which you also shared, if you are what good report declares you to be,—a report which, God knows, I most willingly believe,—you forbore from excommunicating him, lest he should under such sentence draw away many with him, and rend your communion asunder with the frenzy of schism. But this is the thing which is itself an indictment against you at the bar of God, O brother Emeritus, that although you saw that the division of the party of Donatus was so great an evil, that it was thought better that Optatus should be tolerated in your communion than that division should be introduced among you, you nevertheless perpetuate the evil which was wrought in the division of the Church of Christ by your forefathers.

5. Here perhaps you will be disposed, under the exigencies of debate, to attempt to defend Optatus. Do not so, I beseech you; do not so, my brother: it would not become you; and if it would perchance be seemly for any one to do it (though, in fact, nothing is seemly which is wrong), it assuredly would be unseemly for Emeritus to defend Optatus. Perhaps you reply that it would as little become you to accuse him. Granted, by all means. Take, then, the course which lies between defending and accusing him. Say, "Every man shall bear his own burden;"[1] "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?"[2] If, then, notwithstanding the testimony of all Africa,—nay more, of all regions to which the name of Gildo was carried, for Optatus was not less notorious than he,—you have not dared to pronounce judgment concerning Optatus, lest you should rashly decide in regard to one unknown to

[1] Gal. vi. 5. [2] Rom. xiv. 4.

you, is it, I ask, either possible or right for us, proceeding solely on your testimony, to pronounce sentence rashly upon persons whom we do not know? Is it not enough that you should charge them with things of which you have no certain knowledge, without our pronouncing them guilty of things of which we know as little as yourselves? For even though Optatus were in peril through the falsehood of detractors, you defend not him, but yourself, when you say, "I do not know what his character was." How much more obvious, then, is it that the Eastern world knows nothing of the character of those Africans with whom, though much less known to you than Optatus, you find fault! Yet you are disjoined by scandalous schism from Churches in the East, the names of which you have and you read in the sacred books. If your most famous and most scandalously notorious Bishop of Thamugada[1] was at that very time not known to his colleague, I shall not say in Cæsarea, but in Sitifa, so close at hand, how was it possible for the Churches of Corinth, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, Thessalonica, Antioch, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and others which were founded in Christ by the apostles, to know the case of these African traditors, whoever they were; or how was it consistent with justice that they should be condemned by you for not knowing it? Yet with these Churches you hold no communion. You say they are not Christian, and you labour to rebaptize their members. What need I say? What complaint, what protest is necessary here? If I am addressing a right-hearted man, I know that with you I share the keenness of the indignation which I feel. For you doubtless see at once what I might say if I would.

6. Perhaps, however, your forefathers formed of themselves a council, and placed the whole Christian world except themselves under sentence of excommunication. Have you come so to judge of things, as to affirm that the council of the followers of Maximianus who were cut off from you, as you were cut off from the Church, was of no authority against you, because their number was small compared with yours; and yet claim for your council an authority against the nations, which are the inheritance of Christ, and the ends of the earth, which

[1] Optatus.

are His possession?[1] I wonder if the man who does not blush at such pretensions has any blood in his body. Write me, I beseech you, in reply to this letter; for I have heard from some, on whom I could not but rely, that you would write me an answer if I were to address a letter to you. Some time ago, moreover, I sent you a letter; but I do not know whether you received it or answered it, and perhaps your reply did not reach me. Now, however, I beg you not to refuse to answer this letter, and state what you think. But do not occupy yourself with other questions than the one which I have stated, for this is the leading point of a well-ordered discussion of the origin of the schism.

7. The civil powers defend their conduct in persecuting schismatics by the rule which the apostle laid down: "Whoso resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."[2] The whole question therefore is, whether schism be not an evil work, or whether you have not caused schism, so that your resistance of the powers that be is in a good cause and not in an evil work, whereby you would bring judgment on yourselves. Wherefore with infinite wisdom the Lord not merely said, "Blessed are they who are persecuted," but added, "for righteousness' sake."[3] I desire therefore to know from you, in the light of what I have said above, whether it be a work of righteousness to originate and perpetuate your state of separation from the Church. I desire also to know whether it be not rather a work of unrighteousness to condemn unheard the whole Christian world, either because it has not heard what you have heard, or because no proof has been furnished to it of charges which were rashly believed, or without sufficient evidence advanced by you, and to propose on this ground to baptize a second time the members of

[1] Ps. ii. 8. [2] Rom. xiii. 2–4. [3] Matt. v. 10.

so many churches founded by the preaching and labours either of the Lord Himself while He was on earth, or of His apostles; and all this on the assumption that it is excusable for you either not to know the wickedness of your African colleagues who are living beside you, and are using the same sacraments with you, or even to tolerate their misdeeds when known, lest the party of Donatus should be divided, but that it is inexcusable for them, though they reside in most remote regions, to be ignorant of what you either know, or believe, or have heard, or imagine, concerning men in Africa. How great is the perversity of those who cling to their own unrighteousness, and yet find fault with the severity of the civil powers!

8. You answer, perhaps, that Christians ought not to persecute even the wicked. Be it so; let us admit that they ought not: but is it lawful to lay this objection in the way of the powers which are ordained for this very purpose? Shall we erase the apostle's words? Or do your MSS. not contain the words which I mentioned a little while ago? But you will say that we ought not to communicate with such persons. What then? Did you withdraw, some time ago, from communion with the deputy Flavianus, on the ground of his putting to death, in his administration of the laws, those whom he found guilty? Again, you will say that the Roman emperors are incited against you by us. Nay, rather blame yourselves for this, seeing that, as was long ago foretold in the promise concerning Christ, "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him,"[1] they are now members of the Church; and you have dared to wound the Church by schism, and still presume to insist upon rebaptizing her members. Our brethren indeed demand help from the powers which are ordained, not to persecute you, but to protect themselves against the lawless acts of violence perpetrated by individuals of your party, which you yourselves, who refrain from such things, bewail and deplore; just as, before the Roman Empire became Christian, the Apostle Paul took measures to secure that the protection of armed Roman soldiers should be granted him against the Jews who had conspired to kill him. But these emperors,

[1] Ps. lxxii. 11.

whatever the occasion of their becoming acquainted with the crime of your schism might be, frame against you such decrees as their zeal and their office demand. For they bear not the sword in vain; they are the ministers of God to execute wrath upon those that do evil. Finally, if some of our party transgress the bounds of Christian moderation in this matter, it displeases us; nevertheless, we do not on their account forsake the Catholic Church because we are unable to separate the wheat from the chaff before the final winnowing, especially since you yourselves have not forsaken the Donatist party on account of Optatus, when you had not courage to excommunicate him for his crimes.

9. You say, however, "Why seek to have us joined to you, if we be thus stained with guilt?" I reply; Because you still live, and may, if you are willing, be restored. For when you join yourselves to us, *i.e.* to the Church of God, the heritage of Christ, who has the ends of the earth as His possession, you are restored so that you live in vital union with the Root. For the apostle says of the branches which were broken off: "God is able to graff them in again."[1] We exhort you to change, in so far as concerns your dissent from the Church; although, as to the sacraments which you had, we admit that they are holy, since they are the same in all. Wherefore we desire to see you changed from your obstinacy, that is, in order that you who have been cut off may be vitally united to the Root again. For the sacraments which you have not changed are approved by us as you have them; else, in our attempting to correct your sin, we should do impious wrong to those mysteries of Christ which have not been deprived of their worth by your unworthiness. For even Saul did not, with all his sins, destroy the efficacy of the anointing which he received; to which anointing David, that pious servant of God, showed so great respect. We therefore do not insist upon rebaptizing you, because we only wish to restore to you connection with the Root: the form of the branch which has been cut off we accept with approval, if it has not been changed; but the branch, however perfect in its form, cannot bear fruit, except it be united to the root. As

[1] Rom. xi. 23.

to the persecution, so gentle and tempered with clemency, which you say you suffer at the hands of our party, while unquestionably your own party inflict greater harm in a lawless and irregular way upon us,—this is one question: the question concerning baptism is wholly distinct from it; in regard to it, we inquire not where it is, but where it profits. For wherever it is, it is the same; but it cannot be said of him who receives it, that wherever he is, he is the same. We therefore detest the impiety of which men as individuals are guilty in a state of schism; but we venerate everywhere the baptism of Christ. If deserters carry with them the imperial standards, these standards are welcomed back again as they were, if they have remained unharmed, when the deserters are either punished with a severe sentence, or, in the exercise of clemency, restored. If, in regard to this, any more particular inquiry is to be made, that is, as I have said, another question; for in these things, the practice of the Church of God is the rule of our practice.

10. The question between us, however, is, whether your Church or ours is the Church of God. To resolve this, we must begin with the original inquiry, why you became schismatics. If you do not write me an answer, I believe that before the bar of God I shall be easily vindicated as having done my duty in this matter; because I have sent a letter in the interests of peace to a man of whom I have heard that, excepting only his adherence to schismatics, he is a good and well-educated man. Be it yours to consider how you shall answer Him whose forbearance now demands your praise, as His judgment shall in the end demand your fears. If, however, you write a reply to me with as much care as you see me to have bestowed upon this, I believe that, by the mercy of God, the error which now keeps us apart shall perish before the love of peace and the logic of truth. Observe that I have said nothing about the followers of Rogatus,[1] who call you Firmiani, as you call us Macariani. Nor have I spoken

[1] Rogatus, bishop of Cartenna in Mauritania, who left the Donatists and suffered much persecution at the hands of Firmus, a brother of Gildo; hence the Donatists were named by the Rogatists Firmiani. See Augustine, *Contra Literas Petiliani*, book ii. ch. 83.

of your bishop of Rucata (or Rusicada), who is said to have made an agreement with Firmus, promising, on condition of the safety of all his adherents, that the gates should be opened to him, and the Catholics given up to slaughter and pillage. Many other such things I pass unnoticed. Do you therefore in like manner desist from the commonplaces of rhetorical exaggeration concerning actions of men which you have either heard of or known; for you see how I am silent concerning deeds of your party, in order to confine the debate to the question upon which the whole matter hinges,—namely, the origin of the schism.

My brother, beloved and longed for, may the Lord our God breathe into you thoughts tending towards reconciliation.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

(A.D. 406.)

TO JANUARIUS,[1] THE CATHOLIC CLERGY OF THE DISTRICT OF HIPPO[2] SEND THE FOLLOWING.

1. YOUR clergy and your Circumcelliones are venting against us their rage in a persecution of a new kind, and of unparalleled atrocity. Were we to render evil for evil, we should be transgressing the law of Christ. But now, when all that has been done, both on your side and on ours, is impartially considered, it is found that we are suffering what is written, "They rewarded me evil for good;"[3] and (in another Psalm), "My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war."[4] For, seeing that you have arrived at so great age, we suppose you to know perfectly well that the party of Donatus, which at first was called at Carthage the party of Majorinus, did of their own accord accuse Cæcilianus, then bishop of Carthage, before the famous Emperor Constantine. Lest, however, you should have forgotten this, venerable sir, or should pretend not to know, or perhaps (which we scarcely think possible) may

[1] Bishop of Casæ Nigræ in Numidia, and at that time the Donatist primate, as the oldest of their bishops.

[2] Hipponensium Regiorum. [3] Ps. xxxv. 12. [4] Ps. cxx. 6, 7.

never have known it, we insert here a copy of the narrative of Anulinus, then proconsul, to whom the party of Majorinus appealed, requesting that by him as proconsul a statement of the charges which they brought against Cæcilianus should be sent to the Emperor aforesaid:—

2. *To Constantine Augustus, from Anulinus, a man of consular rank, proconsul of Africa, these:*[1]

The welcome and adored celestial writing sent by your Majesty to Cæcilianus, and those over whom he presides, who are called clergy, have been, by the care of your Majesty's most humble servant, engrossed in his Records; and he has exhorted these parties that, heartily agreeing among themselves, since they are seen to be exempted from all other burdens by your Majesty's clemency, they should, preserving Catholic unity, devote themselves to their duties with the reverence due to the sanctity of law and to divine things. After a few days, however, there arose some persons to whom a crowd of people joined themselves, who thought that proceedings should be taken against Cæcilianus, and presented to me[2] a sealed packet wrapped in leather, and a small document without seal, and earnestly besought me to transmit them to your Majesty's sacred and venerable court, which your Majesty's most humble servant[3] has taken care to do, Cæcilianus continuing meanwhile as he was. The Acts pertaining to the case are subjoined, in order that your Majesty may be able to arrive at a decision concerning the whole matter. The documents sent are two: the one in a leathern envelope, with this title, "A document of the Catholic Church containing charges against Cæcilianus, and furnished by the party of Majorinus;" the other attached without a seal to the same leathern envelope.

Given on the 17th day before the Calends of May,

[1] The actual heading of the Report stands thus: "A. GGG. NNN. Anulinus VC. proconsul Africæ." For the interpretation we are indebted to the marginal note on the Codex Gervasianus.

[2] Dicationi meæ.

[3] Parvitas mea.

in the third consulship of our lord Constantine Augustus [*i.e.* April 15, A.D. 313].

3. After this report had been sent to him, the Emperor summoned the parties before a tribunal of bishops to be constituted at Rome. The ecclesiastical records show how the case was there argued and decided, and Cæcilianus pronounced innocent. Surely now, after the peacemaking decision of the tribunal of bishops, all the pertinacity of strife and bitterness should have given way. Your forefathers, however, appealed again to the Emperor, and complained that the decision was not just, and that their case had not been fully heard. Accordingly, he appointed a second tribunal of bishops to meet in Arles, a town of Gaul, where, after sentence had been pronounced against your worthless and diabolical schism, many of your party returned to a good understanding with Cæcilianus; some, however, who were most obstinate and contentious, appealed to the Emperor again. Afterwards, when, yielding to their importunity, he personally interposed in this dispute, which belonged properly to the bishops to decide, having heard the case, he gave sentence against your party, and was the first to pass a law that the properties of your congregations should be confiscated; of all which things we could insert the documentary evidence here, if it were not for making the letter too long. We must, however, by no means omit the investigation and decision in open court of the case of Felix of Aptunga, whom, in the Council of Carthage, under Secundus of Tigisis, primate, your fathers affirmed to be the original cause of all these evils. For the Emperor aforesaid, in a letter of which we annex a copy, bears witness that in this trial your party were before him as accusers and most strenuous prosecutors:—

4. *The Emperors Flavius Constantinus, Maximus Cæsar, and Valerius Licinius Cæsar, to Probianus, proconsul of Africa:*

Your predecessor Ælianus, who acted as substitute for Verus, the superintendent of the prefects, when that most excellent magistrate was by severe illness laid aside in that part of Africa which is under our sway, consi-

dered it, and most justly, to be his duty, amongst other things, to bring again under his investigation and decision the matter of Cæcilianus, or rather the odium which seems to have been stirred up against that bishop of the Catholic Church. Wherefore, having ordered the compearance of Superius, centurion, Cæcilianus, magistrate of Aptunga, and Saturninus, the ex-president of police, and his successor in the office, Calibius the younger, and Solon, an official belonging to Aptunga, he heard the testimony of these witnesses;[1] the result of which was, that whereas objection had been taken to Cæcilianus on the ground of his ordination to the office of bishop by Felix, against whom it seemed that the charge of surrendering and burning the sacred books had been made, the innocence of Felix in this matter was clearly established. Moreover, when Maximus affirmed that Ingentius, a decurion of the town of Ziqua, had forged a letter of the ex-magistrate Cæcilianus, we found, on examining the Acts which were before us, that this same Ingentius had been put on the rack[2] for that offence, and that the infliction of torture on him was not, as alleged, on the ground of his affirming that he was a decurion of Ziqua. Wherefore we desire you to send under a suitable guard to the court of Augustus Constantine the said Ingentius, that in the presence and hearing of those who are now pleading in this case, and who day after day persist in their complaints, it may be made manifest and fully known that they labour in vain to excite odium against the bishop Cæcilianus, and to clamour violently against him. This, we hope, will bring the people to desist, as they should do, from such contentions, and to devote themselves with becoming

[1] The value of the evidence of these witnesses is apparent when we remember that they were all in a position to speak from personal knowledge of the persecution in A.D. 303 (under Diocletian and Maximian), and had in their public capacity some share in enforcing the demand made in that persecution for the surrender of the sacred books. These could tell whether Felix the Bishop of Aptunga was guilty or not of the unfaithfulness to his religion with which the faction of Majorinus reproached him.

[2] Suspensum.

reverence to their religious duties, undistracted by dissension among themselves.

5. Since you see, therefore, that these things are so, why do you provoke odium against us on the ground of the imperial decrees which are in force against you, when you have yourselves done all this before we followed your example? If emperors ought not to use their authority in such cases, if care of these matters lies beyond the province of Christian emperors, who urged your forefathers to remit the case of Cæcilianus, by the proconsul, to the Emperor, and a second time to bring before the Emperor accusations against a bishop whom you had somehow condemned in absence, and on his acquittal to invent and bring before the same Emperor other calumnies against Felix, by whom the bishop aforesaid had been ordained? And now, what other law is in force against your party than that decision of the elder Constantine, to which your forefathers of their own choice appealed, which they extorted from him by their importunate complaints, and which they preferred to the decision of an episcopal tribunal? If you are dissatisfied with the decrees of emperors, who were the first to compel the emperors to set these in array against you? For you have no more reason for crying out against the Catholic Church because of the decrees of emperors against you, than those men would have had for crying out against Daniel, who, after his deliverance, were thrown in to be devoured by the same lions by which they first sought to have him destroyed; as it is written: "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion."[1] These slanderous enemies insisted that Daniel should be thrown into the den of lions: his innocence prevailed over their malice; he was taken from the den unharmed, and they, being cast into it, perished. In like manner, your forefathers cast Cæcilianus and his companions to be destroyed by the king's wrath; and when, by their innocence, they were delivered from this, you yourselves now suffer from these kings what your party wished them to suffer; as it is written: "Whoso diggeth a pit for his neighbour, shall himself fall therein."[2]

[1] Prov. xix. 12. [2] Ecclus. xxvii. 29, and Prov. xxvi. 27.

6. You have therefore no ground for complaint against us: nay more, the clemency of the Catholic Church would have led us to desist from even enforcing these decrees of the emperors, had not your clergy and Circumcelliones, disturbing our peace, and destroying us by their most monstrous crimes and furious deeds of violence, compelled us to have these decrees revived and put in force again. For before these more recent edicts of which you complain had come into Africa, these desperadoes laid ambush for our bishops on their journeys, abused our clergy with savage blows, and assaulted our laity in the same most cruel manner, and set fire to their habitations. A certain presbyter who had of his own free choice preferred the unity of our Church, was for so doing dragged out of his own house, cruelly beaten without form of law, rolled over and over in a miry pond, covered with a matting of rushes, and exhibited as an object of pity to some and of ridicule to others, while his persecutors gloried in their crime; after which they carried him away where they pleased, and reluctantly set him at liberty after twelve days. When Proculeianus[1] was challenged by our bishop concerning this outrage, at a meeting of the municipal courts, he at first endeavoured to evade inquiry into the matter by pretending that he knew nothing of it; and when the demand was immediately repeated, he publicly declared that he would say nothing more on the subject. And the perpetrators of that outrage are at this day among your presbyters, continuing moreover to keep us in terror, and to persecute us to the utmost of their power.

7. Our bishop, however, did not complain to the emperors of the wrongs and persecution which the Catholic Church in our district suffered in those days. But when a Council had been convened,[2] it was agreed that you should be invited to meet our party peaceably, in order that, if it were possible, you [*i.e.* the bishops on both sides, for the letter is written by the clergy of Hippo] might have a conference, and the error being taken out of the way, brotherly love might rejoice in the bond of peace between us. You may learn from your own records

[1] Donatist bishop of Hippo. See Letter XXXIII. p. 101.
[2] At Carthage, A.D. 403.

the answer which Proculeianus made at first on that occasion, that you would call a Council together, and would there see what you ought to answer; and how afterwards, when he was again publicly reminded of his promise, he stated, as the Acts bear witness, that he refused to have any conference with a view to peace. After this, when the notorious atrocities of your clergy and Circumcelliones continued, a case was brought to trial;[1] and Crispinus being condemned as a heretic, although he was through the forbearance of the Catholics exempted from the fine which the imperial edict imposed on heretics of ten pounds of gold, nevertheless thought himself warranted in appealing to the emperors. As to the answer which was made to that appeal, was it not extorted by the preceding wickedness of your party and by his own appeal? And yet, even after that answer was given, he was permitted to escape the infliction of that fine, through the intercession of our bishops with the Emperor on his behalf. From that Council, however, our bishops sent deputies to the court, who obtained a decree that not all your bishops and clergy should be held liable to this fine of ten pounds of gold, which the decree had imposed on all heretics, but only those in whose districts the Catholic Church suffered violence at the hands of your party. But by the time that the deputation came to Rome, the wounds of the Catholic bishop of Bagæ, who had just then been dreadfully injured, had moved the Emperor to send such edicts as were actually sent. When these edicts came to Africa, seeing especially that strong pressure had begun to be brought upon you, not to any evil thing, but for your good, what should you have done but invited our bishops to meet you, as they had invited yours to meet them, that by a conference the truth might be brought to light?

8. Not only, however, have you failed to do this, but your party go on inflicting yet greater injuries upon us. Not contented with beating us with bludgeons and killing some with the sword, they even, with incredible ingenuity in crime, throw lime mixed with acid [? vitriol] into our people's eyes to blind

[1] For a more detailed reference to this case, see Letter CV. sec. 4. Crispinus was charged with an attempt to kill Possidius the bishop of Calama. See also Aug. *Cont. Crescon.* b. iii. c. 46, n. 50, and c. 47, n. 51.

them. For pillaging our houses, moreover, they have fashioned huge and formidable implements, armed with which they wander here and there, breathing out threats of slaughter, rapine, burning of houses, and blinding of our eyes; by which things we have been constrained in the first instance to complain to you, venerable sir, begging you to consider how, under these so-called terrible laws of Catholic emperors, many, nay all of you, who say that you are the victims of persecution, are settled in peace in the possessions which were your own, or which you have taken from others, while we suffer such unheard-of wrongs at the hands of your party. You say that you are persecuted, while we are killed with clubs and swords by your armed men. You say that you are persecuted, while our houses are pillaged by your armed robbers. You say that you are persecuted, while many of us have our eyesight destroyed by the lime and acid with which your men are armed for the purpose. Moreover, if their course of crime brings some of them to death, they make out that these deaths are justly the occasion of odium against us, and of glory to them. They take no blame to themselves for the harm which they do to us, and they lay upon us the blame of the harm which they bring upon themselves. They live as robbers, they die as Circumcelliones, they are honoured as martyrs! Nay, I do injustice to robbers in this comparison, for we have never heard of robbers destroying the eyesight of those whom they have plundered: they indeed take away those whom they kill from the light, but they do not take away the light from those whom they leave in life.

9. On the other hand, if at any time we get men of your party into our power, we keep them unharmed, showing great love towards them; and we tell them everything by which the error which has severed brother from brother is refuted. We do as the Lord Himself commanded us, in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; say, Ye are our brethren, to those who hate you, and who cast you out, that the name of the Lord may be glorified, and that He may appear to them with joy; but let them be put to shame."[1] And thus some of them we

[1] Isa. lxvi. 5, as given by Augustine.

persuade, through their considering the evidences of the truth and the beauty of peace, not to be baptized anew for this sign of allegiance to our king they have already received (though they were as deserters), but to accept that faith, and love of the Holy Spirit, and union to the body of Christ, which formerly they had not. For it is written, "Purifying their hearts by faith;"[1] and again, "Charity covereth a multitude of sins."[2] If, however, either through too great obduracy, or through shame making them unable to bear the taunts of those with whom they were accustomed to join so frequently in falsely reproaching us and contriving evil against us, or perhaps more through fear lest they should come to share along with us such injuries as they were formerly wont to inflict on us,—if, I say, from any of these causes, they refuse to be reconciled to the unity of Christ, they are allowed to depart, as they were detained, without suffering any harm. We also exhort our laity as far as we can to detain them without doing them any harm, and bring them to us for admonition and instruction. Some of them obey us and do this, if it is in their power: others deal with them as they would with robbers, because they actually suffer from them such things as robbers are wont to do. Some of them strike their assailants in protecting their own bodies from their blows: while others apprehend them and bring them to the magistrates; and though we intercede on their behalf, they do not let them off, because they are very much afraid of their savage outrages. Yet all the while, these men, though persisting in the practices of robbers, claim to be honoured as martyrs when they receive the due reward of their deeds!

10. Accordingly our desire, which we lay before you, venerable sir, by this letter and by the brethren whom we have sent, is as follows. In the first place, if it be possible, let a peaceable conference be held with our bishops, so that an end may be put to the error itself, not to the men who embrace it, and men corrected rather than punished; and as you formerly despised their proposals for agreement, let them now proceed from your side. How much better for you to have such a conference between your bishops and ours, the proceedings of which may be written down and sent with signa-

[1] Acts xv. 9. [2] 1 Pet. iv. 8.

ture of the parties to the Emperor, than to confer with the civil magistrates, who cannot do otherwise than administer the laws which have been passed against you! For your colleagues who sailed from this country said that they had come to have their case heard by the prefects. They also named our holy father the Catholic bishop Valentinus, who was then at court, saying that they wished to be heard along with him. This the judge could not concede, as he was guided in his judicial functions by the laws which were passed against you: the bishop, moreover, had not come on this footing, or with any such instructions from his colleagues. How much better qualified therefore will the Emperor himself be to decide regarding your case, when the report of that conference has been read before him, seeing that he is not bound by these laws, and has power to enact other laws instead of them; although it may be said to be a case upon which final decision was pronounced long ago! Yet, in wishing this conference with you, we seek not to have a second final decision, but to have it made known as already settled to those who meanwhile are not aware that it is so. If your bishops be willing to do this, what do you thereby lose? Do you not rather gain, inasmuch as your willingness for such conference will become known, and the reproach, hitherto deserved, that you distrust your own cause will be taken away? Do you, perchance, suppose that such conference would be unlawful? Surely you are aware that Christ our Lord spoke even to the devil concerning the law,[1] and that by the Apostle Paul debates were held not only with Jews, but even with heathen philosophers of the sect of the Stoics and of the Epicureans.[2] Is it, perchance, that the laws of the Emperor do not permit you to meet our bishops? If so, assemble together in the meantime your bishops in the region of Hippo, in which we are suffering such wrongs from men of your party. For how much more legitimate and open is the way of access to us for the writings which you might send to us, than for the arms with which they assail us!

11. Finally, we beg you to send back such writings by our brethren whom we have sent to you. If, however, you will

[1] Matt. iv. 4. [2] Acts xvii. 18.

not do this, at least hear us as well as those of your own party, at whose hands we suffer such wrongs. Show us the truth for which you allege that you suffer persecution, at the time when we are suffering so great cruelties from your side. For if you convict us of being in error, perhaps you will concede to us an exemption from being rebaptized by you, because we were baptized by persons whom you have not condemned; and you granted this exemption to those whom Felicianus of Musti, and Prætextatus of Assuri, had baptized during the long period in which you were attempting to cast them out of their churches by legal interdicts, because they were in communion with Maximianus, along with whom they were condemned explicitly and by name in the Council of Bagæ. All which things we can prove by the judicial and municipal transactions, in which you brought forward the decisions of this same Council of yours, when you wished to show the judges that the persons whom you were expelling from your ecclesiastical buildings were persons by schism separated from you. Nevertheless, you who have by schism severed yourselves from the seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed,[1] refuse to be expelled from our ecclesiastical buildings, when the decree to this effect proceeds not from judges such as you employed in dealing with schismatics from your sect, but from the kings of the earth themselves, who worship Christ as the prophecy had foretold, and from whose bar you retired vanquished when you brought accusation against Cæcilianus.

12. If, however, you will neither instruct us nor listen to us, come yourselves, or send into the district of Hippo some of your party, with some of us as their guides, that they may see your army equipped with their weapons; nay, more fully equipped than ever army was before, for no soldier when fighting against barbarians was ever known to add to his other weapons lime and acid to destroy the eyes of his enemies. If you refuse this also, we beg you at least to write to them to desist now from these things, and refrain from murdering, plundering, and blinding our people. We will not say, condemn them; for it is for yourselves to see how no contami-

[1] Gen. xxii. 18.

nation is brought to you by the toleration within your communion of those whom we prove to be robbers, while contamination is brought to us by our having members against whom you have never been able to prove that they were traditors. If, however, you treat all our remonstrances with contempt, we shall never regret that we desired to act in a peaceful and orderly way. The Lord will so plead for His Church, that you, on the other hand, shall regret that you despised our humble attempt at conciliation.

LETTER LXXXIX.

(A.D. 406.)

TO FESTUS, MY LORD WELL BELOVED, MY SON HONOURABLE AND WORTHY OF ESTEEM, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. If, on behalf of error and inexcusable dissension, and falsehoods which have been in every way possible disproved, men are so presumptuous as to persevere in boldly assailing and threatening the Catholic Church, which seeks their salvation, how much more is it reasonable and right for those who maintain the truth of Christian peace and unity,—truth which commends itself even to those who profess to deny it or attempt to resist it,—to labour constantly and with energy, not only in the defence of those who are already Catholics, but also for the correction of those who are not yet within the Church! For if obstinacy aims at the possession and exercise of indomitable strength, how great should be the strength of constancy which devotes persevering and unwearied labours to a cause which it knows to be both pleasing to God, and beyond all question necessarily approved by the judgment of wise men!

2. Could there, moreover, be anything more lamentable as an instance of perversity, than for men not only to refuse to be humbled by the correction of their wickedness, but even to claim commendation for their conduct, as is done by the Donatists, when they boast that they are the victims of persecution; either through incredible blindness not knowing, or through inexcusable passion pretending not to know, that men

are made martyrs not by the amount of their suffering, but by the cause in which they suffer? This I would say even were I opposing men who were only involved in the darkness of error, and suffering penalties on that account most truly merited, and who had not dared to assault any one with insane violence. But what shall I say against those whose fatal obstinacy is such that it is checked only by fear of losses, and is taught only by exile how universal (as had been foretold) is the diffusion of the Church, which they prefer to attack rather than to acknowledge? And if the things which they suffer under this most gentle discipline be compared with those things which they in reckless fury perpetrate, who does not see to which party the name of persecutors more truly belongs? Nay, even though wicked sons abstain from violence, they do, by their abandoned way of life, inflict upon their affectionate parents a much more serious wrong than their father and mother inflict upon them, when, with a sternness proportioned to the strength of their love, they endeavour without dissimulation to compel them to live uprightly.

3. There exist the strongest evidences in public documents, which you can read if you please, or rather, which I beseech and exhort you to read, by which it is proved that their predecessors, who originally separated themselves from the peace of the Church, did of their own accord dare to bring accusation against Cæcilianus before the Emperor by means of Anulinus, who was proconsul at that time. Had they gained the day in that trial, what else would Cæcilianus have suffered at the hands of the Emperor than that which, when they were defeated, he awarded to them? But truly, if they having accused him had prevailed, and Cæcilianus and his colleagues had been expelled from their sees, or, through persisting in their conspiracy, had exposed themselves to severer punishments (for the imperial censure could not pass unpunished the resistance of persons who had been defeated in the civil courts), they would then have published as worthy of all praise the Emperor's wise measures and anxious care for the good of the Church. But now, because they have themselves lost their case, being wholly unable to prove the charges which they advanced, if they suffer anything for their iniquity, they

call it persecution; and not only set no bounds to their wicked violence, but also claim to be honoured as martyrs: as if the Catholic Christian emperors were following in their measures against their most obstinate wickedness any other precedent than the decision of Constantine, to whom they of their own accord appealed as the accusers of Cæcilianus, and whose authority they so esteemed above that of all the bishops beyond the sea, that to him rather than to them they referred this ecclesiastical dispute. To him, again, they protested against the first judgment given against them by the bishops whom he had appointed to examine the case in Rome, and to him also they appealed against the second judgment given by the bishops at Arles: yet when at last they were defeated by his own decision, they remained unchanged in their perversity. I think that even the devil himself would not have had the assurance to persist in such a cause, if he had been so often overthrown by the authority of the judge to whom he had of his own will chosen to appeal.

4. It may be said, however, that these are human tribunals, and that they might have been cajoled, misguided, or bribed. Why, then, is the Christian world libelled and branded with the crime laid to the charge of some who are said to have surrendered to persecutors the sacred books? For surely it was neither possible for the Christian world, nor incumbent upon it, to do otherwise than believe the judges whom the plaintiffs had chosen, rather than the plaintiffs against whom these judges pronounced judgments. These judges are responsible to God for their opinion, whether just or unjust; but what has the Church, diffused throughout the world, done that it should be deemed necessary for her to be rebaptized by the Donatists upon no other ground than because, in a case in which she was not able to decide as to the truth, she has thought herself called upon to believe those who were in a position to judge it rightly, rather than those who, though defeated in the civil courts, refused to yield? O weighty indictment against all the nations to which God promised that they should be blessed in the seed of Abraham, and has now made His promise good! When they with one voice demand, Why do you wish to rebaptize us? the answer given is, Be-

cause you do not know what men in Africa were guilty of surrendering the sacred books; and being thus ignorant, accepted the testimony of the judges who decided the case as more worthy of credit than that of those by whom the accusation was brought. No man deserves to be blamed for the crime of another; what, then, has the whole world to do with the sin which some one in Africa may have committed? No man deserves to be blamed for a crime about which he knows nothing; and how could the whole world possibly know the crime in this case, whether the judges or the party condemned were guilty? Ye who have understanding, judge what I say. Here is the justice of heretics: the party of Donatus condemns the whole world unheard, because the whole world does not condemn a crime unknown. But for the world, truly, it suffices to have the promises of God, and to see fulfilled in itself what prophets predicted so long ago, and to recognise the Church by means of the same Scriptures by which Christ her King is recognised. For as in them are foretold concerning Christ the things which we read in gospel history to have been fulfilled in Him, so also in them have been foretold concerning the Church the things which we now behold fulfilled in the world.

5. Possibly some thinking people might be disturbed by what they are accustomed to say regarding baptism, viz. that it is the true baptism of Christ only when it is administered by a righteous man, were it not that on this subject the Christian world holds what is most manifestly evangelical truth as taught in the words of John: "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."[1] Wherefore the Church calmly declines to place her hope in man, lest she fall under the curse pronounced in Scripture, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man,"[2] but places her hope in Christ, who so took upon Him the form of a servant as not to lose the form of God, of whom it is said, "The same is He which baptizeth." Therefore, whoever the man be, and whatever office he bear who administers the ordinance, it is not he who baptizes,—that is the work of Him upon whom the dove

[1] John i. 33. [2] Jer. xvii. 5.

descended. So great is the absurdity in which the Donatists are involved in consequence of these foolish opinions, that they can find no escape from it. For when they admit the validity and reality of baptism when one of their sect baptizes who is a guilty man, but whose guilt is concealed, we ask them, Who baptizes in this case? and they can only answer, God; for they cannot affirm that a man guilty of sin (say of adultery) can sanctify any one. If, then, when baptism is administered by a man known to be righteous, he sanctifies the person baptized; but when it is administered by a wicked man, whose wickedness is hidden, it is not he, but God, who sanctifies. Those who are baptized ought to wish to be baptized rather by men who are secretly bad than by men manifestly good, for God sanctifies much more effectually than any righteous man can do. If it be palpably absurd that one about to be baptized ought to wish to be baptized by a hypocritical adulterer rather than by a man of known chastity, it follows plainly, that whoever be the minister that dispenses the rite, the baptism is valid, because He Himself baptizes upon whom the dove descended.

6. Notwithstanding the impression which truth so obvious should produce on the ears and hearts of men, such is the whirlpool of evil custom by which some have been engulfed, that rather than yield, they will resist both authority and argument of every kind. Their resistance is of two kinds—either with active rage or with passive immobility. What remedies, then, must the Church apply when seeking with a mother's anxiety the salvation of them all, and distracted by the frenzy of some and the lethargy of others? Is it right, is it possible, for her to despise or give up any means which may promote their recovery? She must necessarily be esteemed burdensome by both, just because she is the enemy of neither. For men in frenzy do not like to be bound, and men in lethargy do not like to be stirred up; nevertheless the diligence of charity perseveres in restraining the one and stimulating the other, out of love to both. Both are provoked, but both are loved; both, while they continue under their infirmity, resent the treatment as vexatious; both express their thankfulness for it when they are cured.

7. Moreover, whereas they think and boast that we receive them into the Church just as they were, it is not so. We receive them completely changed, because they do not begin to be Catholics until they have ceased to be heretics. For their sacraments, which we have in common with them, are not the objects of dislike to us, because they are not human, but Divine. That which must be taken from them is the error, which is their own, and which they have wickedly imbibed; not the sacraments, which they have received like ourselves, and which they bear and have,—to their own condemnation, indeed, because they use them so unworthily; nevertheless, they truly have them. Wherefore, when their error is forsaken, and the perversity of schism corrected in them, they pass over from heresy into the peace of the Church, which they formerly did not possess, and without which all that they did possess was only doing them harm. If, however, in thus passing over they are not sincere, this is a matter not for us, but for God, to judge. And yet, some who were suspected of insincerity because they had passed over to us through fear, have been found in some subsequent temptations so faithful as to surpass others who had been originally Catholics. Therefore let it not be said that nothing is accomplished when strong measures are employed. For when the entrenchments of stubborn custom are stormed by fear of human authority, this is not all that is done, because at the same time faith is strengthened, and the understanding convinced, by authority and arguments which are Divine.

8. These things being so, be it known to your Grace that your men in the region of Hippo are still Donatists, and that your letter has had no influence upon them. The reason why it failed to move them I need not write; but send some one, either a servant or a friend of your own, whose fidelity you can entrust with the commission, and let him come not to them in the first place, but to us without their knowledge; and when he has carefully consulted with us as to what is best to be done, let him do it with the Lord's help. For in these measures we are acting not only for their welfare, but also on behalf of our own men who have become Catholics, to

whom the vicinity of these Donatists is so dangerous, that it cannot be looked upon by us as a small matter.

I could have written much more briefly; but I wished you to have a letter from me, by which you might not only be yourself informed of the reason of my solicitude, but also be provided with an answer to any one who might dissuade you from earnestly devoting your energies to the correction of the people who belong to you, and might speak against us for wishing you to do this. If in this I have done what was unnecessary, because you had yourself either learned or thought out these principles, or if I have been burdensome to you by inflicting so long a letter upon one so engrossed with public affairs, I beg you to forgive me. I only entreat you not to despise what I have brought before you and requested at your hands. May the mercy of God be your safeguard!

LETTER XC.

(A.D. 408.)

TO MY NOBLE LORD AND BROTHER, WORTHY OF ALL ESTEEM, BISHOP AUGUSTINE, NECTARIUS SENDS GREETING.

I DO not dwell upon the strength of the love men bear to their native land, for you know it. It is the only emotion which has a stronger claim than love of kindred. If there were any limit or time beyond which it would be lawful for right-hearted men to withdraw themselves from its control, I have by this time well earned exemption from the burdens which it imposes. But since love and gratitude towards our country gain strength every day, and the nearer one comes to the end of life, the more ardent is his desire to leave his country in a safe and prosperous condition, I rejoice, in beginning this letter, that I am addressing myself to a man who is versed in all kinds of learning, and therefore able to enter into my feelings.

There are many things in the colony of Calama which justly bind my love to it. I was born here, and I have (in the opinion of others) rendered great services to this community. Now, my lord most excellent and worthy of all

esteem, this town has fallen disastrously by a grievous misdemeanour on the part of her citizens,[1] which must be punished with very great severity, if we are dealt with according to the rigour of the civil law. But a bishop is guided by another law. His duty is to promote the welfare of men, to interest himself in any case only with a view to the benefit of the parties, and to obtain for other men the pardon of their sins at the hand of the Almighty God. Wherefore I beseech you with all possible urgency to secure that, if the matter is to be made the subject of a prosecution, the guiltless be protected, and a distinction drawn between the innocent and those who did the wrong. This, which, as you see, is a demand in accordance with your own natural sentiments, I pray you to grant. An assessment to compensate for the losses caused by the tumult can be easily levied. We only deprecate the severity of revenge. May you live in the more full enjoyment of the Divine favour, my noble lord, and brother worthy of all esteem.

LETTER XCI.

(A.D. 408.)

TO MY NOBLE LORD AND JUSTLY HONOURED BROTHER NECTARIUS, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

1. I DO not wonder that, though your limbs are chilled by age, your heart still glows with patriotic fire. I admire this, and, instead of grieving, I rejoice to learn that you not only remember, but by your life and practice illustrate, the maxim that there is no limit either in measure or in time to the claims which their country has upon the care and service of right-hearted men. Wherefore we long to have you enrolled in the service of a higher and nobler country, through holy love, to which (up to the measure of our capacity) we are sustained amid the perils and toils which we meet with among those whose welfare we seek in urging them to make that country their own. Oh that we had you such a citizen of

[1] He refers to a riot in which the Pagans, after celebrating a heathen festival, attacked the Christians on June 1, 408 A.D.

that country, that you would think that there ought to be no limit either in measure or in time to your efforts for the good of that small portion of her citizens who are on this earth pilgrims! This would be a better loyalty, because you would be responding to the claims of a better country; and if you resolved that in your time on earth your labours for her welfare should have no end, you would in her eternal peace be recompensed with joy that shall have no end.

2. But till this be done,—and it is not beyond hope that you should be able to gain, or should even now be most wisely considering that you ought to gain, that country to which your father has gone before you,—till this be done, I say, you must excuse us if, for the sake of that country which we desire never to leave, we cause some distress to that country which you desire to leave in the full bloom of honour and prosperity. As to the flowers which thus bloom in your country, if we were discussing this subject with one of your wisdom, we have no doubt that you would be easily convinced, or rather, would yourself readily perceive, in what way a commonwealth should flourish. The foremost of your poets has sung of certain flowers of Italy; but in your own country we have been taught by experience, not how it has blossomed with heroes, so much as how it has gleamed with weapons of war: nay, I ought to write how it has burned rather than how it has gleamed; and instead of the weapons of war, I should write the fires of incendiaries. If so great a crime were to remain unpunished, without any rebuke such as the miscreants have deserved, do you think that you would leave your country in the full bloom of honour and prosperity? O blooming flowers, yielding not fruit, but thorns! Consider now whether you would prefer to see your country flourish by the piety of its inhabitants, or by their escaping the punishment of their crimes; by the correction of their manners, or by outrages to which impunity emboldens them. Compare these things, I say, and judge whether or not you love your country more than we do; whether its prosperity and honour are more truly and earnestly sought by you or by us.

3. Consider for a little those books, *De Republica*, from which you imbibed that sentiment of a most loyal citizen,

that there is no limit either in measure or in time to the claims which their country has upon the care and service of right-hearted men. Consider them, I beseech you, and observe how great are the praises there bestowed upon frugality, self-control, conjugal fidelity, and those chaste, honourable, and upright manners, the prevalence of which in any city entitles it to be spoken of as flourishing. Now the Churches which are multiplying throughout the world are, as it were, sacred seminaries of public instruction, in which this sound morality is inculcated and learned, and in which, above all, men are taught the worship due to the true and faithful God, who not only commands men to attempt, but also gives grace to perform, all those things by which the soul of man is furnished and fitted for fellowship with God, and for dwelling in the eternal heavenly kingdom. For this reason He hath both foretold and commanded the casting down of the images of the many false gods which are in the world. For nothing so effectually renders men depraved in practice, and unfit to be good members of society, as the imitation of such deities as are described and extolled in pagan writings.

4. In fact, those most learned men (whose *beau ideal* of a republic or commonwealth in this world was, by the way, rather investigated or described by them in private discussions, than established and realized by them in public measures) were accustomed to set forth as models for the education of youth the examples of men whom they esteemed eminent and praiseworthy, rather than the example given by their gods. And there is no question that the young man in Terence,[1] who, beholding a picture upon a wall in which was portrayed the licentious conduct of the king of the gods, fanned the flame of the passion which mastered him, by the encouragement which such high authority gave to wickedness, would not have fallen into the desire, nor have plunged into the commission, of such a shameful deed if he had chosen to imitate Cato instead of Jupiter; but how could he make such a choice, when he was compelled in the temples to worship Jupiter rather than Cato? Perhaps it may be said that we should not bring forward from a comedy arguments to put to shame the wanton-

[1] *Eunuchus*, Act iii. Sc. 5.

ness and the impious superstition of profane men. But read or recall to mind how wisely it is argued in the books above referred to, that the style and the plots of comedies would never be approved by the public voice if they did not harmonize with the manners of those who approved them; wherefore, by the authority of men most illustrious and eminent in the commonwealth to which they belonged, and engaged in debating as to the conditions of a perfect commonwealth, our position is established, that the most degraded of men may be made yet worse if they imitate their gods,—gods, of course, which are not true, but false and invented.

5. You will perhaps reply, that all those things which were written long ago concerning the life and manners of the gods are to be far otherwise than literally understood and interpreted by the wise. Nay, we have heard within the last few days that such wholesome interpretations are now read to the people when assembled in the temples. Tell me, is the human race so blind to truth as not to perceive things so plain and palpable as these? When, by the art of painters, founders, hammermen, sculptors, authors, players, singers, and dancers, Jupiter is in so many places exhibited in flagrant acts of lewdness, how important it was that in his own Capitol at least his worshippers might have read a decree from himself prohibiting such crimes! If, through the absence of such prohibition, these monsters, in which shame and profanity culminate, are regarded with enthusiasm by the people, worshipped in their temples, and laughed at in their theatres; if, in order to provide sacrifices for them, even the poor must be despoiled of their flocks; if, in order to provide actors who shall by gesture and dance represent their infamous achievements, the rich squander their estates, can it be said of the communities in which these things are done, that they flourish? The flowers with which they bloom owe their birth not to a fertile soil, nor to a wealthy and bounteous virtue; for them a worthy parent is found in that goddess Flora,[1] whose dramatic games are celebrated with a profligacy

[1] Here culminates in the original a play upon words, towards which Augustine has been working with the ingenuity of a rhetorician from the beginning of the second paragraph; but the zest of his wit is necessarily lost in translation, be-

so utterly dissolute and shameless, that any one may infer from them what kind of demon that must be which cannot be appeased unless—not birds, nor quadrupeds, nor even human life—but (oh, greater villany!) human modesty and virtue, perish as sacrifices on her altars.

6. These things I have said, because of your having written that the nearer you come to the end of life, the greater is your desire to leave your country in a safe and flourishing condition. Away with all these vanities and follies, and let men be converted to the true worship of God, and to chaste and pious manners: then will you see your country flourishing, not in the vain opinion of fools, but in the sound judgment of the wise; when your fatherland here on earth shall have become a portion of that Fatherland into which we are born not by the flesh, but by faith, and in which all the holy and faithful servants of God shall bloom in the eternal summer, when their labours in the winter of time are done. We are therefore resolved, neither on the one hand to lay aside Christian gentleness, nor on the other to leave in your city that which would be a most pernicious example for all others to follow. For success in this dealing we trust to the help of God, if His indignation against the evil-doers be not so great as to make Him withhold His blessing. For certainly both the gentleness which we desire to maintain, and the discipline which we shall endeavour without passion to administer, may be hindered, if God in His hidden counsels order it otherwise, and either appoint that this so great wickedness be punished with a more severe chastisement, or in yet greater displeasure leave the sin without punishment in this world, its guilty authors being neither reproved nor reformed.

7. You have, in the exercise of your judgment, laid down the principles by which a bishop should be influenced; and after saying that your town has fallen disastrously by a grievous misdemeanour on the part of your citizens, which must be punished with great severity if they are dealt with according to the rigour of the civil law, you add: "But a

cause in our language the words "flower" and "flourish" are not so immediately suggestive of each other as the corresponding noun and verb in Latin (*flos* and *florere*).

bishop is guided by another law; his duty is to promote the welfare of men, to interest himself in any case only with a view to the benefit of the parties, and to obtain for other men the pardon of their sins at the hand of the Almighty God."[1] This we by all means labour to secure, that no one be visited with undue severity of punishment, either by us or by any other who is influenced by our interposition; and we seek to promote the true welfare of men, which consists in the blessedness of well-doing, not in the assurance of impunity in evil-doing. We do also seek earnestly, not for ourselves alone, but on behalf of others, the pardon of sin: but this we cannot obtain, except for those who have been turned by correction from the practice of sin. You add, moreover: "I beseech you with all possible urgency to secure that if the matter is to be made the subject of a prosecution, the guiltless be protected, and a distinction drawn between the innocent and those who did the wrong."

8. Listen to a brief account of what was done, and let the distinction between innocent and guilty be drawn by yourself. In defiance of the most recent laws,[2] certain impious rites were celebrated on the Pagan feast-day, the calends of June, no one interfering to forbid them, and with such unbounded effrontery that a most insolent multitude passed along the street in which the church is situated, and went on dancing in front of the building,—an outrage which was never committed even in the time of Julian. When the clergy endeavoured to stop this most illegal and insulting procedure, the church was assailed with stones. About eight days after that, when the bishop had called the attention of the authorities to the well-known laws on the subject, and they were preparing to carry out that which the law prescribed, the church was a second time assailed with stones. When, on the following day, our people wished to make such complaint as they deemed necessary in open court, in order to make these villains afraid, their rights as citizens were denied them. On the same day there was a storm of hailstones, that they might be made afraid, if not by men, at

[1] Letter XC. p. 382.

[2] The law of Honorius, passed on Nov. 24, 407, forbidding the celebration of public heathen solemnities and festivals (*quidquam solemnitatis agitare*).

least by the divine power, thus requiting them for their showers of stones against the church; but as soon as this was over they renewed the attack for the third time with stones, and at last endeavoured to destroy both the buildings and the men in them by fire: one servant of God who lost his way and met them they killed on the spot, all the rest escaping or concealing themselves as they best could; while the bishop hid himself in some crevice into which he forced himself with difficulty, and in which he lay folded double while he heard the voices of the ruffians seeking him to kill him, and expressing their mortification that through his escaping them their principal design in this grievous outrage had been frustrated. These things went on from about the tenth hour until the night was far advanced. No attempt at resistance or rescue was made by those whose authority might have had influence on the mob. The only one who interfered was a stranger, through whose exertions a number of the servants of God were delivered from the hands of those who were trying to kill them, and a great deal of property was recovered from the plunderers by force: whereby it was shown how easily these riotous proceedings might have been either prevented wholly or arrested, if the citizens, and especially the leading men, had forbidden them, either from the first or after they had begun.

9. Accordingly you cannot in that community draw a distinction between innocent and guilty persons, for all are guilty; but perhaps you may distinguish degrees of guilt. Those are in a comparatively small fault, who, being kept back by fear, especially by fear of offending those whom they knew to have leading influence in the community and to be hostile to the Church, did not dare to render assistance to the Christians; but all are guilty who consented to these outrages, though they neither perpetrated them nor instigated others to the crime: more guilty are those who perpetrated the wrong, and most guilty are those who instigated them to it. Let us, however, suppose that the instigation of others to these crimes is a matter of suspicion rather than of certain knowledge, and let us not investigate those things which can be found out in no other way than by subjecting witnesses to torture. Let us also forgive those who through fear thought

it better for them to plead secretly with God for the bishop and His other servants, than openly to displease the powerful enemies of the church. What reason can you give for holding that those who remain should be subjected to no correction and restraint? Do you really think that a case of such cruel rage should be held up to the world as passing unpunished? We do not desire to gratify our anger by vindictive retribution for the past, but we are concerned to make provision in a truly merciful spirit for the future. Now, wicked men have something in respect to which they may be punished, and that by Christians, in a merciful way, and so as to promote their own profit and well-being. For they have these three things: the life and health of the body, the means of supporting that life, and the means and opportunities of living a wicked life. Let the two former remain untouched in the possession of those who repent of their crime: this we desire, and this we spare no pains to secure. But as to the third, upon it God will, if it please Him, inflict punishment in His great compassion, dealing with it as a decaying or diseased part, which must be removed with the pruning-knife. If, however, He be pleased either to go beyond this, or not to permit the punishment to go so far, the reason for this higher and doubtless more righteous counsel remains with Him: our duty is to devote pains and use our influence according to the light which is granted to us, beseeching His approval of our endeavours to do that which shall be most for the good of all, and praying Him not to permit us to do anything which He who knoweth all things much better than we do sees to be inexpedient both for ourselves and for His Church.

10. When I went recently to Calama, that under so grievous sorrow I might either comfort the downcast or soothe the indignant among our people, I used all my influence with the Christians to persuade them to do what I judged to be their duty at that time. I then at their own request admitted to an audience the Pagans also, the source and cause of all this mischief, in order that I might admonish them what they should do if they were wise, not only for the removal of present anxiety, but also for the obtaining of everlasting salvation. They listened to many things which I said,

and they preferred many requests to me; but far be it from me to be such a servant as to find pleasure in being petitioned by those who do not humble themselves before my Lord to ask from Him. With your quick intelligence, you will readily perceive that our aim must be, while preserving Christian gentleness and moderation, to act so that we may either make others afraid of imitating their perversity, or have cause to desire others to imitate their profiting by correction. As for the loss sustained, this is either borne by the Christians or remedied by the help of their brethren. What concerns us is the gaining of souls, which even at the risk of life we are impatient to secure; and our desire is, that in your district we may have larger success, and that in other districts we may not be hindered by the influence of your example. May God in His mercy grant to us to rejoice in your salvation!

LETTER XCII.

(A.D. 408.)

TO THE NOBLE AND JUSTLY DISTINGUISHED LADY ITALICA, A DAUGHTER WORTHY OF HONOUR IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST, BISHOP AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. I HAVE learned, not only by your letter, but also by the statements of the person who brought it to me, that you earnestly solicit a letter from me, believing that you may derive from it very great consolation. What you may gain from my letter it is for yourself to judge; I at least felt that I should neither refuse nor delay compliance with your request. May your own faith and hope comfort you, and that love which is shed abroad in the hearts of the pious by the Holy Ghost,[1] whereof we have now a portion as an earnest of the whole, in order that we may learn to desire its consummate fulness. For you ought not to consider yourself desolate while you have Christ dwelling in your heart by faith; nor ought you to sorrow as those heathens who have no hope, seeing that in regard to those friends, who are not lost, but only called earlier than ourselves to the

[1] Rom. v. 5.

country whither we shall follow them, we have hope, resting on a most sure promise, that from this life we shall pass into that other life, in which they shall be to us more beloved as they shall be better known, and in which our pleasure in loving them shall not be alloyed by any fear of separation.

2. Your late husband, by whose decease you are now a widow, was truly well known to you, but better known to himself than to you. And how could this be, when you saw his face, which he himself did not see, if it were not that the inner knowledge which we have of ourselves is more certain, since no man "knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in man"?[1] but when the Lord cometh, "who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts,"[2] then shall nothing in any one be concealed from his neighbour; nor shall there be anything which any one might reveal to his friends, but keep hidden from strangers, for no stranger shall be there. What tongue can describe the nature and the greatness of that light by which all those things which are now in the hearts of men concealed shall be made manifest? who can with our weak faculties even approach it? Truly that Light is God Himself, for "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all;"[3] but He is the Light of purified minds, not of these bodily eyes. And the mind shall then be, what meanwhile it is not, able to see that light.

3. But this the bodily eye neither now is, nor shall then be, able to see. For everything which can be seen by the bodily eye must be in some place, nor can be everywhere in its totality, but with a smaller part of itself occupies a smaller space, and with a larger part a larger space. It is not so with God, who is invisible and incorruptible, "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see."[4] For He cannot be seen by men through the bodily organ by which men see corporeal things. For if He were inaccessible to the minds also of the saints, it would not be said, "They looked unto Him, and were lightened" [translated by Aug., "Draw near

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 11.
[2] 1 Cor. iv. 5.
[3] 1 John i. 5.
[4] 1 Tim. vi. 16.

unto Him, and be enlightened"];[1] and if He was invisible to the minds of the saints, it would not be said, "We shall see Him as He is:" for consider the whole context there in that Epistle of John: "Beloved," he says, "now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."[2] We shall therefore see Him according to the measure in which we shall be like Him; because now the measure in which we do not see Him is according to the measure of our unlikeness to Him. We shall therefore see Him by means of that in which we shall be like Him. But who would be so infatuated as to assert that we either are or shall be in our bodies like unto God? The likeness spoken of is therefore in the inner man, "which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."[3] And we shall become the more like unto Him, the more we advance in knowledge of Him and in love; because "though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day,"[4] yet so as that, however far one may have become advanced in this life, he is far short of that perfection of likeness which is fitted for seeing God, as the apostle says, "face to face."[5] If by these words we were to understand the bodily face, it would follow that God has a face such as ours, and that between our face and His there must be a space intervening when we shall see Him face to face. And if a space intervene, this presupposes a limitation and a definite conformation of members and other things, absurd to utter, and impious even to think of, by which most empty delusions the natural man, which "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,"[6] is deceived.

4. For some of those who talk thus foolishly affirm, as I am informed, that we see God now by our minds, but shall then see Him by our bodies; yea, they even say that the wicked shall in the same manner see Him. Observe how far they have gone from bad to worse, when, unpunished for their foolish speaking, they talk at random, unrestrained by either fear or shame. They used to say at first, that Christ endowed

[1] Ps. xxxiv. 5.
[2] 1 John iii. 2.
[3] Col. iii. 10.
[4] 2 Cor. iv. 6.
[5] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.
[6] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

only His own flesh with this faculty of seeing God with the bodily eye; then they added to this, that all the saints shall see God in the same way when they have received their bodies again in the resurrection; and now they have granted that the same thing is possible to the wicked also. Well, let them grant what gifts they please, and to whom they please: for who may say anything against men giving away that which is their own? for he that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own.[1] Be it yours, however, in common with all who hold sound doctrine, not to presume to take in this way from your own any of these errors; but when you read, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,"[2] learn from it that the impious shall not see Him: for the impious are neither blessed nor pure in heart. Moreover, when you read, "Now we see through a glass darkly,[3] but then face to face,"[4] learn from this that we shall then see Him face to face by the same means by which we now see Him through a glass darkly. In both cases alike, the vision of God belongs to the inner man, whether when we walk in this pilgrimage still by faith, in which it uses the glass and the *αἴνιγμα*, or when, in the country which is our home, we shall perceive by sight, which vision the words "face to face" denote.

5. Let the flesh raving with carnal imaginations hear these words: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."[5] If this be the manner of worshipping Him, how much more of seeing Him! For who durst affirm that the Divine essence is seen in a corporal manner, when He has not permitted it to be worshipped in a corporal manner? They think, however, that they are very acute in saying and in pressing as a question for us to answer: Was Christ able to endow His flesh so as that He could with His eyes see the Father, or was He not? If we reply that He was not, they publish abroad that we have denied the omnipotence of God; if, on the other hand, we grant that He was able, they affirm that their argument is established by our reply. How much more excusable is the folly of those who maintain that the flesh shall be changed into the Divine substance, and shall be what God Himself is, in order that thus

[1] John viii. 44. [2] Matt. v. 8. [3] *ἐν αἰνίγματι.*
[4] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [5] John iv. 24.

they may endow with fitness for seeing God that which is meanwhile removed by so great diversity of nature from likeness to Him! Yet I believe they reject from their creed, perhaps also refuse to hear, this error. Nevertheless, if they were in like manner pressed with the question above quoted, as to whether God can or cannot do this [viz. change our flesh into the Divine substance], which alternative will they choose? Will they limit His power by answering that He cannot; or if they concede that He can, will they by this concession grant that it shall be done? Let them get out of the dilemma which they have proposed to others as above, in the same way by which they get out of this dilemma proposed to others by them. Moreover, why do they contend that this gift is to be attributed only to the eyes, and not to all the other senses of Christ? Shall God then be a sound, that He may be perceived by the ear? and an exhalation, that He may be discerned by the sense of smell? and a liquid of some kind, that He may be also imbibed? and a solid body, that He may be also touched? No, they say. What then? we reply; can God be this, or can He not? If they say He cannot, why do they derogate from the omnipotence of God? If they say He can, but is not willing, why do they show favour to the eyes alone, and grudge the same honour to the other senses of Christ? Do they carry their folly just as far as they please? How much better is our course, who do not prescribe limits to their folly, but would fain prevent them from entering into it at all!

6. Many things may be brought forward for the confutation of that madness. Meanwhile, however, if at any time they assail your ears, read this letter to the supporters of such error, and do not count it too great a labour to write back to me as well as you can what they say in reply. Let me add that our hearts are purified by faith, because the vision of God is promised to us as the reward of faith. Now, if this vision of God were to be through the bodily eyes, in vain are the souls of saints exercised for receiving it; nay, rather, a soul which cherishes such sentiments is not exercised in itself, but is wholly in the flesh. For where will it dwell more resolutely and fixedly than in that by means of which it ex-

pects that it shall see God? How great an evil this would be I rather leave to your own intelligence to observe, than labour to prove by a long argument.

May your heart dwell always under the Lord's keeping, noble and justly distinguished lady, and daughter worthy of honour in the love of Christ! Salute from me, with the respect due to your worth, your sons, who are along with yourself honourable, and to me dearly beloved in the Lord.

LETTER XCIII.

(A.D. 408.)

TO VINCENTIUS, MY BROTHER DEARLY BELOVED, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING.

CHAP. I. 1. I have received a letter which I believe to be from you to me: at least I have not thought this incredible, for the person who brought it is one whom I know to be a Catholic Christian, and who, I think, would not dare to impose upon me. But even though the letter may perchance not be from you, I have considered it necessary to write a reply to the author, whoever he may be. You know me now to be more desirous of rest, and earnest in seeking it, than when you knew me in my earlier years at Carthage, in the lifetime of your immediate predecessor Rogatus. But we are precluded from this rest by the Donatists, the repression and correction of whom, by the powers which are ordained of God, appears to me to be labour not in vain. For we already rejoice in the correction of many who hold and defend the Catholic unity with such sincerity, and are so glad to have been delivered from their former error, that we admire them with great thankfulness and pleasure. Yet these same persons, under some indescribable bondage of custom, would in no way have thought of being changed to a better condition, had they not, under the shock of this alarm, directed their minds earnestly to the study of the truth; fearing lest, if without profit, and in vain, they suffered hard things at the hands of men, for the sake not of righteousness, but of their own obstinacy and presumption, they should afterwards re-

ceive nothing else at the hand of God than the punishment due to wicked men who despised the admonition which He so gently gave and His paternal correction; and being by such reflection made teachable, they found not in mischievous or frivolous human fables, but in the promises of the divine books, that universal Church which they saw extending according to the promise throughout all nations: just as, on the testimony of prophecy in the same Scriptures, they believed without hesitation that Christ is exalted above the heavens, though He is not seen by them in His glory. Was it my duty to be displeased at the salvation of these men, and to call back my colleagues from a fatherly diligence of this kind, the result of which has been, that we see many blaming their former blindness? For they see that they were blind who believed Christ to have been exalted above the heavens although they saw Him not, and yet denied that His glory is spread over all the earth although they saw it; whereas the prophet has with so great plainness included both in one sentence, "Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Thy glory above all the earth."[1]

2. Wherefore, if we were so to overlook and forbear with those cruel enemies who seriously disturb our peace and quietness by manifold and grievous forms of violence and treachery, as that nothing at all should be contrived and done by us with a view to alarm and correct them, truly we would be rendering evil for evil. For if any one saw his enemy running headlong to destroy himself when he had become delirious through a dangerous fever, would he not in that case be much more truly rendering evil for evil if he permitttd him to run on thus, than if he took measures to have him seized and bound? And yet he would at that moment appear to the other to be most vexatious, and most like an enemy, when, in truth, he had proved himself most useful and most compassionate; although, doubtless, when health was recovered, he would express to him his gratitude with a warmth proportioned to the measure in which he had felt his refusal to indulge him in his time of phrenzy. Oh, if I could but show you how many we have even from the Circumcelliones, who are now approved Catholics, and condemn their former life, and the wretched delusion under

[1] Ps. cviii. 5.

which they believed that they were doing in behalf of the Church of God whatever they did under the promptings of a restless temerity, who nevertheless would not have been brought to this soundness of judgment had they not been, as persons beside themselves, bound with the cords of those laws which are distasteful to you! As to another form of most serious distemper,—that, namely, of those who had not, indeed, a boldness leading to acts of violence, but were pressed down by a kind of inveterate sluggishness of mind, and would say to us: "What you affirm is true, nothing can be said against it; but it is hard for us to leave off what we have received by tradition from our fathers,"—why should not such persons be shaken up in a beneficial way by a law bringing upon them inconvenience in worldly things, in order that they might rise from their lethargic sleep, and awake to the salvation which is to be found in the unity of the Church? How many of them, now rejoicing with us, speak bitterly of the weight with which their ruinous course formerly oppressed them, and confess that it was our duty to inflict annoyance upon them, in order to prevent them from perishing under the disease of lethargic habit, as under a fatal sleep!

3. You will say that to some these remedies are of no service. Is the art of healing, therefore, to be abandoned, because the malady of some is incurable? You look only to the case of those who are so obdurate that they refuse even such correction. Of such it is written, "In vain have I smitten your children: they received no correction:"[1] and yet I suppose that those of whom the prophet speaks were smitten in love, not from hatred. But you ought to consider also the very large number over whose salvation we rejoice. For if they were only made afraid, and not instructed, this might appear to be a kind of inexcusable tyranny. Again, if they were instructed only, and not made afraid, they would be with more difficulty persuaded to embrace the way of salvation, having become hardened through the inveteracy of custom: whereas many whom we know well, when arguments had been brought before them, and the truth made apparent by testimonies from the word of God, answered us that they desired

[1] Jer. ii. 30.

to pass into the communion of the Catholic Church, but were in fear of the violence of worthless men, whose enmity they would incur; which violence they ought indeed by all means to despise when it was to be borne for righteousness' sake, and for the sake of eternal life. Nevertheless the weakness of such men ought not to be regarded as hopeless, but to be supported until they gain more strength. Nor may we forget what the Lord Himself said to Peter when he was yet weak: "Thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow Me afterwards."[1] When, however, wholesome instruction is added to means of inspiring salutary fear, so that not only the light of truth may dispel the darkness of error, but the force of fear may at the same time break the bonds of evil custom, we are made glad, as I have said, by the salvation of many, who with us bless God, and render thanks to Him, because by the fulfilment of His covenant, in which He promised that the kings of the earth should serve Christ, He has thus cured the diseased and restored health to the weak.

CHAP. II. 4. Not every one who is indulgent is a friend; nor is every one an enemy who smites. Better are the wounds of a friend than the proffered kisses of an enemy.[2] It is better with severity to love, than with gentleness to deceive. More good is done by taking away food from one who is hungry, if, through freedom from care as to his food, he is forgetful of righteousness, than by providing bread for one who is hungry, in order that, being thereby bribed, he may consent to unrighteousness. He who binds the man who is in a phrenzy, and he who stirs up the man who is in a lethargy, are alike vexatious to both, and are in both cases alike prompted by love for the patient. Who can love us more than God does? And yet He not only gives us sweet instruction, but also quickens us by salutary fear, and this unceasingly. Often adding to the soothing remedies by which He comforts men the sharp medicine of tribulation, He afflicts with famine even the pious and devout patriarchs,[3] disquiets a rebellious people by more severe chastisements, and refuses, though thrice besought, to take away the thorn in the flesh of the apostle, that He may make His strength perfect in weak-

[1] John xiii. 36. [2] Prov. xxvii. 6. [3] Gen. xii., xxvi., xlii., and xliii.

ness.[1] Let us by all means love even our enemies, for this is right, and God commands us so to do, in order that we may be the children of our Father who is in heaven, "who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."[2] But as we praise these His gifts, let us in like manner ponder His correction of those whom He loves.

5. You are of opinion that no one should be compelled to follow righteousness; and yet you read that the householder said to his servants, "Whomsoever ye shall find, compel them to come in."[3] You also read how he who was at first Saul, and afterwards Paul, was compelled, by the great violence with which Christ coerced him, to know and to embrace the truth; for you cannot but think that the light which our eyes enjoy is more precious to men than money or any other possession. This light, lost suddenly by him when he was cast to the ground by the heavenly voice, he did not recover until he became a member of the Holy Church. You are also of opinion that no coercion is to be used with any man in order to his deliverance from the fatal consequences of error; and yet you see that, in examples which cannot be disputed, this is done by God, who loves us with more real regard for our profit than any other can; and you hear Christ saying, "No man can come to me except the Father draw him,"[4] which is done in the hearts of all those who, through fear of the wrath of God, betake themselves to Him. You know also that sometimes the thief scatters food before the flock that he may lead them astray, and sometimes the shepherd brings wandering sheep back to the flock with his rod.

6. Did not Sarah, when she had the power, choose rather to afflict the insolent bondwoman? And truly she did not cruelly hate her whom she had formerly by an act of her own kindness made a mother; but she put a wholesome restraint upon her pride.[5] Moreover, as you well know, these two women, Sarah and Hagar, and their two sons Isaac and Ishmael, are figures representing spiritual and carnal persons. And although we read that the bondwoman and her son

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 7–9. [2] Matt. v. 45. [3] Luke xiv. 23.
[4] John vi. 44. [5] Gen. xvi. 5.

suffered great hardships from Sarah, nevertheless the Apostle Paul says that Isaac suffered persecution from Ishmael: "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now;"[1] whence those who have understanding may perceive that it is rather the Catholic Church which suffers persecution through the pride and impiety of those carnal men whom it endeavours to correct by afflictions and terrors of a temporal kind. Whatever therefore the true and rightful Mother does, even when something severe and bitter is felt by her children at her hands, she is not rendering evil for evil, but is applying the benefit of discipline to counteract the evil of sin, not with the hatred which seeks to harm, but with the love which seeks to heal. When good and bad do the same actions and suffer the same afflictions, they are to be distinguished not by what they do or suffer, but by the causes of each: *e.g.* Pharaoh oppressed the people of God by hard bondage; Moses afflicted the same people by severe correction when they were guilty of impiety:[2] their actions were alike; but they were not alike in the motive of regard to the people's welfare,—the one being inflated by the lust of power, the other inflamed by love. Jezebel slew prophets, Elijah slew false prophets;[3] I suppose that the desert of the actors and of the sufferers respectively in the two cases was wholly diverse.

7. Look also to the New Testament times, in which the essential gentleness of love was to be not only kept in the heart, but also manifested openly: in these the sword of Peter is called back into its sheath by Christ, and we are taught that it ought not to be taken from its sheath even in Christ's defence.[4] We read, however, not only that the Jews beat the Apostle Paul, but also that the Greeks beat Sosthenes, a Jew, on account of the Apostle Paul.[5] Does not the similarity of the events apparently join both; and, at the same time, does not the dissimilarity of the causes make a real difference? Again, God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up[6] for us all.[7] Of the Son also it is said, "who loved

[1] Gal. iv. 29.
[2] Ex. v. 9 and xxxii. 27.
[3] 1 Kings xviii. 4, 40.
[4] Matt. xxvi. 52.
[5] Acts xvi. 22, 23, and xviii. 17.
[6] παρέδωκεν.
[7] Rom. viii. 32.

me, and gave Himself[1] for me;"[2] and it is also said of Judas that Satan entered into him that he might betray[3] Christ.[4] Seeing, therefore, that the Father delivered up His Son, and Christ delivered up His own body, and Judas delivered up his Master, wherefore is God holy and man guilty in this delivering up of Christ, unless that in the one action which both did, the reason for which they did it was not the same? Three crosses stood in one place: on one was the thief who was to be saved; on the second, the thief who was to be condemned; on the third, between them, was Christ, who was about to save the one thief and condemn the other. What could be more similar than these crosses? what more unlike than the persons who were suspended on them? Paul was given up to be imprisoned and bound,[5] but Satan is unquestionably worse than any gaoler: yet to him Paul himself gave up one man for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.[6] And what say we to this? Behold, both deliver a man to bondage; but he that is cruel consigns his prisoner to one less severe, while he that is compassionate consigns his to one who is more cruel. Let us learn, my brother, in actions which are similar to distinguish the intentions of the agents; and let us not, shutting our eyes, deal in groundless reproaches, and accuse those who seek men's welfare as if they did them wrong. In like manner, when the same apostle says that he had delivered certain persons unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme,[7] did he render to these men evil for evil, or did he not rather esteem it a good work to correct evil men by means of the evil one?

8. If to suffer persecution were in all cases a praiseworthy thing, it would have sufficed for the Lord to say, "Blessed are they which are persecuted," without adding "for righteousness' sake."[8] Moreover, if to inflict persecution were in all cases blameworthy, it would not have been written in the sacred books, "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I persecute [cut off, E. V.]."[9] In some cases, therefore, both he that suffers persecution is in the wrong, and he that inflicts

[1] παράδοντος.
[2] Gal. ii. 20.
[3] παραδῷ.
[4] John xiii. 2.
[5] Acts xxi. 23, 24.
[6] 1 Cor. v. 5.
[7] 1 Tim. i. 20.
[8] Matt. v. 10.
[9] Ps. ci. 5.

it is in the right. But the truth is, that always both the bad have persecuted the good, and the good have persecuted the bad: the former doing harm by their unrighteousness, the latter seeking to do good by the administration of discipline; the former with cruelty, the latter with moderation; the former impelled by lust, the latter under the constraint of love. For he whose aim is to kill is not careful how he wounds, but he whose aim is to cure is cautious with his lancet; for the one seeks to destroy what is sound, the other that which is decaying. The wicked put prophets to death; prophets also put the wicked to death. The Jews scourged Christ; Christ also scourged the Jews. The apostles were given up by men to the civil powers; the apostles themselves gave men up to the power of Satan. In all these cases, what is important to attend to but this: who were on the side of truth, and who on the side of iniquity; who acted from a desire to injure, and who from a desire to correct what was amiss?

CHAP. III. 9. You say that no example is found in the writings of evangelists and apostles, of any petition presented on behalf of the Church to the kings of the earth against her enemies. Who denies this? None such is found. But at that time the prophecy, "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear," was not yet fulfilled. Up to that time the words which we find at the beginning of the same Psalm were receiving their fulfilment, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed."[1] Truly, if past events recorded in the prophetic books were figures of the future, there was given under King Nebuchadnezzar a figure both of the time which the Church had under the apostles, and of that which she has now. In the age of the apostles and martyrs, that was fulfilled which was prefigured when the aforesaid king compelled pious and just men to bow down to his image, and cast into the flames all who refused. Now, however, is fulfilled that which was prefigured soon after in the same king, when, being converted to the worship of the true God, he made a decree throughout

[1] Ps. ii. 10, 11, 1, 2.

his empire, that whosoever should speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, should suffer the penalty which their crime deserved. The earlier time of that king represented the former age of emperors who did not believe in Christ, at whose hands the Christians suffered because of the wicked; but the later time of that king represented the age of the successors to the imperial throne, now believing in Christ, at whose hands the wicked suffer because of the Christians.

10. It is manifest, however, that moderate severity, or rather clemency, is carefully observed towards those who, under the Christian name, have been led astray by perverse men, in the measures used to prevent them who are Christ's sheep from wandering, and to bring them back to the flock, when by punishments, such as exile and fines, they are admonished to consider what they suffer, and wherefore, and are taught to prefer the Scriptures which they read to human legends and calumnies. For which of us, yea, which of you, does not speak well of the laws issued by the emperors against heathen sacrifices? In these, assuredly, a penalty much more severe has been appointed, for the punishment of that impiety is death. But in repressing and restraining you, the thing aimed at has been rather that you should be admonished to depart from evil, than that you should be punished for a crime. For perhaps what the apostle said of the Jews may be said of you: "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge: for, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God."[1] For what else than your own righteousness are you desiring to establish, when you say that none are justified but those who may have had the opportunity of being baptized by you? In regard to this statement made by the apostle concerning the Jews, you differ from those to whom it originally applied in this, that you have the Christian sacraments, of which they are still destitute. But in regard to the words, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness," and "they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," you are

[1] Rom. x. 2, 3.

exactly like them, excepting only those among you who know what is the truth, and who in the wilfulness of their perversity continue to fight against truth which is perfectly well known to them. The impiety of these men is perhaps even a greater sin than idolatry. Since, however, they cannot be easily convicted of this (for it is a sin which lies concealed in the mind), you are all alike restrained with a comparatively gentle severity, as being not so far alienated from us. And this I may say, both concerning all heretics without distinction, who, while retaining the Christian sacraments, are dissenters from the truth and unity of Christ, and concerning all Donatists without exception.

11. But as for you, who are not only, in common with these last, styled Donatists, from Donatus, but also specially named Rogatists, from Rogatus, you indeed seem to be more gentle in disposition, because you do not rage up and down with bands of these savage Circumcelliones; but no wild beast is said to be gentle if, because of its not having teeth and claws, it wounds no one. You say that you have no wish to be cruel: I think that power, not will, is wanting to you. For you are in number so few, that even if you desire it, you dare not move against the multitudes which are opposed to you. Let us suppose, however, that you do not wish to do that which you have not strength to do; let us suppose that the gospel rule, "If any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also,"[1] is so understood and obeyed by you that resistance to those who persecute you is unlawful, whether they have right or wrong on their side. Rogatus, the founder of your sect, either did not hold this view, or was guilty of inconsistency; for he fought with the keenest determination in a lawsuit about certain things which, according to your statement, belonged to you. If to him it had been said, Which of the apostles ever defended his property in a matter concerning faith by appeal to the civil courts? as you have put the question in your letter, "Which of the apostles ever invaded the property of other men in a matter concerning faith?" he could not find any example of this in the Divine writings; but he might per-

[1] Matt. v. 40.

haps have found some true defence if he had not separated himself from the true Church, and then audaciously claimed to hold in the name of the true Church the disputed possession.

CHAP. IV. 12. As to the obtaining or putting in force of edicts of the powers of this world against schismatics and heretics, those from whom you separated yourselves were very active in this matter, both against you, so far as we have heard, and against the followers of Maximianus, as we prove by the indisputable evidence of their own Records; but you had not yet separated yourselves from them at the time when in their petition they said to the Emperor Julian that "nothing but righteousness found a place with him,"—a man whom all the while they knew to be an apostate, and whom they saw to be so given over to idolatry, that they must either admit idolatry to be righteousness, or be unable to deny that they had wickedly lied when they said that nothing but righteousness had a place with him with whom they saw that idolatry had so large a place. Grant, however, that that was a mistake in the use of words, what say you as to the deed itself? If not even that which is just is to be sought by appeal to an emperor, why was that which was by you supposed to be just sought from Julian?

13. Do you reply that it is lawful to petition the Emperor in order to recover what is one's own, but not lawful to accuse another in order that he may be coerced by the Emperor? I may remark, in passing, that in even petitioning for the recovery of what is one's own, the ground covered by apostolic example is abandoned, because no apostle is found to have ever done this. But apart from this, when your predecessors brought before the Emperor Constantine, by means of the proconsul Anulinus, their accusations against Cæcilianus, who was then bishop of Carthage, with whom as a guilty person they refused to have communion, they were not endeavouring to recover something of their own which they had lost, but were by calumnies assailing one who was, as we think, and as the issue of the judicial proceedings showed, an innocent man; and what more heinous crime could have been perpetrated by them than this? If, however, as you erroneously suppose, they did in his case deliver up to the judgment of the civil powers

a man who was indeed guilty, why do you object to our doing that which your own party first presumed to do, and for doing which we would not find fault with them, if they had done it not with an envious desire to do harm, but with the intention of reproving and correcting what was wrong. But we have no hesitation in finding fault with you, who think that we are criminal in bringing any complaint before a Christian emperor against the enemies of our communion, seeing that a document given by your predecessors to Anulinus the proconsul, to be forwarded by him to the Emperor Constantine, bore this superscription: "Libellus Ecclesiæ Catholicæ, criminum Cæciliani, traditus a parte Majorini."[1] We find fault, moreover, with them more particularly, because when they had of their own accord gone to the Emperor with accusations against Cæcilianus, which they ought by all means to have in the first place proved before those who were his colleagues beyond the sea, and when the Emperor, acting in a much more orderly way than they had done, referred to bishops the decision of this case pertaining to bishops which had been brought before him, they, even when defeated by a decision against them, would not come to peace with their brethren. Instead of this, they next accused at the bar of the temporal sovereign, not Cæcilianus only, but also the bishops who had been appointed judges; and finally, from a second episcopal tribunal they appealed to the Emperor again. Nor did they consider it their duty to yield either to truth or to peace when he himself inquired into the case and gave his decision.

14. Now what else could Constantine have decreed against Cæcilianus and his friends, if they had been defeated when your predecessors accused them, than the things decreed against the very men who, having of their own accord brought the accusations, and having failed to prove what they alleged, refused even when defeated to acquiesce in the truth? The Emperor, as you know, in that case decreed for the first time that the property of those who were convicted of schism and obstinately resisted the unity of the Church should be confiscated. If, however, the issue had been that your predeces-

[1] See Letter LXXXVIII. § 2.

sors who brought the accusations had gained their case, and the Emperor had made some such decree against the communion to which Cæcilianus belonged, you would have wished the emperors to be called the friends of the Church's interests, and the guardians of her peace and unity. But when such things are decreed by emperors against the parties who, having of their own accord brought forward accusations, were unable to substantiate them, and who, when a welcome back to the bosom of peace was offered to them on condition of their amendment, refused the terms, an outcry is raised that this is an unworthy wrong, and it is maintained that no one ought to be coerced to unity, and that evil should not be requited for evil to any one. What else is this than what one of yourselves wrote: "What we wish is holy"?[1] And in view of these things, it was not a great or difficult thing for you to reflect and discover how the decree and sentence of Constantine, which was published against you on the occasion of your predecessors so frequently bringing before the Emperor charges which they could not make good, should be in force against you; and how all succeeding emperors, especially those who are Catholic Christians, necessarily act according to it as often as the exigencies of your obstinacy make it necessary for them to take any measures in regard to you.

15. It was an easy thing for you to have reflected on these things, and perhaps some time to have said to yourselves: Seeing that Cæcilianus either was innocent, or at least could not be proved guilty, what sin has the Christian Church spread so far and wide through the world committed in this matter? On what ground could it be unlawful for the Christian world to remain ignorant of that which even those who made it matter of accusation against others could not prove? Why should those whom Christ has sown in His field, that is, in this world, and has commanded to grow alongside of the tares until the harvest,[2]—those many thousands of believers in all nations, whose multitude the Lord compared to the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea, to whom He promised of old, and has now given, the blessing in the seed of Abraham,—

[1] Quod volumus sanctum est.—TYCHONIUS.

[2] Matt. xiii. 24–30.

why, I ask, should the name of Christians be denied to all these, because, forsooth, in regard to this case, in the discussion of which they took no part, they preferred to believe the judges, who under grave responsibility gave their decision, rather than the plaintiffs, against whom the decision was given? Surely no man's crime can stain with guilt another who does not know of its commission. How could the faithful, scattered throughout the world, be cognisant of the crime of surrendering the sacred books as committed by men, whose guilt their accusers, even if they knew it, were at least unable to prove? Unquestionably this one fact of ignorance on their part most easily demonstrates that they had no share in the guilt of this crime. Why then should the innocent be charged with crimes which they never committed, because of their being ignorant of crimes which, justly or unjustly, are laid to the charge of others? What room is left for innocence, if it is criminal for one to be ignorant of the crimes of others? Moreover, if the mere fact of their ignorance proves, as has been said, the innocence of the people in so many nations, how great is the crime of separation from the communion of these innocent people! For the deeds of guilty parties which either cannot be proved to those who are innocent, or cannot be believed by them, bring no stain upon any one, since, even when known, they are borne with in order to preserve fellowship with those who are innocent. For the good are not to be deserted for the sake of the wicked, but the wicked are to be borne with for the sake of the good; as the prophets bore with those against whom they delivered such testimonies, and did not cease to take part in the sacraments of the Jewish people; as also our Lord bore with guilty Judas, even until he met the end which he deserved, and permitted him to take part in the sacred supper along with the innocent disciples; as the apostles bore with those who preached Christ through envy,—a sin peculiarly satanic;[1] as Cyprian bore with colleagues guilty of avarice, which, after the example of the apostle,[2] he calls idolatry. In fine, whatever was done at that time among these bishops, although perhaps it was known by some of them, is, unless there be respect of persons in judgment, un-

[1] Phil. i. 15, 18. [2] Col. iii. 5.

known to all: why, then, is not peace loved by all? These thoughts might easily occur to you; perhaps you already entertain them. But it would be better for you to be devoted to earthly possessions, through fear of losing which you might be moved to consent to known truth, than to be devoted to that worthless vainglory which you think you will by such consent forfeit in the estimation of men.

CHAP. V. 16. You now see therefore, I suppose, that the thing to be considered when any one is coerced, is not the mere fact of the coercion, but the nature of that to which he is coerced, whether it be good or bad: not that any one can be good in spite of his own will, but that, through fear of suffering what he does not desire, he either renounces his hostile prejudices, or is compelled to examine truth of which he had been contentedly ignorant; and under the influence of this fear repudiates the error which he was wont to defend, or seeks the truth of which he formerly knew nothing, and now willingly holds what he formerly rejected. Perhaps it would be utterly useless to assert this in words, if it were not demonstrated by so many examples. We see not a few men here and there, but many cities, once Donatist, now Catholic, vehemently detesting the diabolical schism, and ardently loving the unity of the Church; and these became Catholic under the influence of that fear which is to you so offensive by the laws of emperors, from Constantine, before whom your party of their own accord impeached Cæcilianus, down to the emperors of our own time, who most justly decree that the decision of the judge whom your own party chose, and whom they preferred to a tribunal of bishops, should be maintained in force against you.

17. I have therefore yielded to the evidence afforded by these instances which my colleagues have laid before me. For originally my opinion was, that no one should be coerced into the unity of Christ, that we must act only by words, fight only by arguments, and prevail by force of reason, lest we should have those whom we knew as avowed heretics feigning themselves to be Catholics. But this opinion of mine was overcome not by the words of those who controverted it, but by the conclusive instances to which they could point. For,

in the first place, there was set over against my opinion my own town, which, although it was once wholly on the side of Donatus, was brought over to the Catholic unity by fear of the imperial edicts, but which we now see filled with such detestation of your ruinous perversity, that it would scarcely be believed that it had ever been involved in your error. There were so many others which were mentioned to me by name, that, from facts themselves, I was made to own that to this matter the word of Scripture might be understood as applying: "Give opportunity to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser."[1] For how many were already, as we assuredly know, willing to be Catholics, being moved by the indisputable plainness of truth, but daily putting off their avowal of this through fear of offending their own party! How many were bound, not by truth—for you never pretended to that as yours—but by the heavy chains of inveterate custom, so that in them was fulfilled the divine saying: "A servant (who is hardened) will not be corrected by words; for though he understand, he will not answer"![2] How many supposed the sect of Donatus to be the true Church, merely because ease had made them too listless, or conceited, or sluggish, to take pains to examine Catholic truth! How many would have entered earlier had not the calumnies of slanderers, who declared that we offered something else than we do upon the altar of God, shut them out! How many, believing that it mattered not to which party a Christian might belong, remained in the schism of Donatus only because they had been born in it, and no one was compelling them to forsake it and pass over into the Catholic Church!

18. To all these classes of persons the dread of those laws in the promulgation of which kings serve the Lord in fear has been so useful, that now some say we were willing for this some time ago; but thanks be to God, who has given us occasion for doing it at once, and has cut off the hesitancy of procrastination! Others say: We already knew this to be true, but we were held prisoners by the force of old custom: thanks be to the Lord, who has broken these bonds asunder, and has brought us into the bond of peace! Others say: We knew

[1] Prov. ix. 9. [2] Prov. xxix. 19.

not that the truth was here, and we had no wish to learn it; but fear made us become earnest to examine it when we became alarmed, lest, without any gain in things eternal, we should be smitten with loss in temporal things: thanks be to the Lord, who has by the stimulus of fear startled us from our negligence, that now being disquieted we might inquire into those things which, when at ease, we did not care to know! Others say: We were prevented from entering the Church by false reports, which we could not know to be false unless we entered it; and we would not enter unless we were compelled: thanks be to the Lord, who by His scourge took away our timid hesitation, and taught us to find out for ourselves how vain and absurd were the lies which rumour had spread abroad against His Church: by this we are persuaded that there is no truth in the accusations made by the authors of this heresy, since the more serious charges which their followers have invented are without foundation. Others say: We thought, indeed, that it mattered not in what communion we held the faith of Christ; but thanks to the Lord, who has gathered us in from a state of schism, and has taught us that it is fitting that the one God be worshipped in unity.

19. Could I therefore maintain opposition to my colleagues, and by resisting them stand in the way of such conquests of the Lord, and prevent the sheep of Christ which were wandering on your mountains and hills—that is, on the swellings of your pride—from being gathered into the fold of peace, in which there is one flock and one Shepherd?[1] Was it my duty to obstruct these measures, in order, forsooth, that you might not lose what you call your own, and might without fear rob Christ of what is His: that you might frame your testaments according to Roman law, and might by calumnious accusations break the Testament made with the sanction of Divine law to the fathers, in which it was written, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed":[2] that you might have freedom in your transactions in the way of buying and selling, and might be emboldened to divide and claim as your own that which Christ bought by giving Himself as its

[1] John x. 16. [2] Gen. xxvi. 4.

price: that any gift made over by one of you to another might remain unchallenged, and that the gift which the God of gods has bestowed upon His children, called from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof,[1] might become invalid: that you might not be sent into exile from the land of your natural birth, and that you might labour to banish Christ from the kingdom bought with His blood, which extends from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth?[2] Nay verily; let the kings of the earth serve Christ by making laws for Him and for His cause. Your predecessors exposed Cæcilianus and his companions to be punished by the kings of the earth for crimes with which they were falsely charged: let the lions now be turned to break in pieces the bones of the calumniators, and let no intercession for them be made by Daniel when he has been proved innocent, and set free from the den in which they meet their doom;[3] for he that prepareth a pit for his neighbour shall himself most justly fall into it.[4]

CHAP. VI. 20. Save yourself therefore, my brother, while you have this present life, from the wrath which is to come on the obstinate and the proud. The formidable power of the authorities of this world, when it assails the truth, gives glorious opportunity of probation to the strong, but puts dangerous temptation before the weak who are righteous; but when it assists the proclamation of the truth, it is the means of profitable admonition to the wise, and of unprofitable vexation to the foolish among those who have gone astray. "For there is no power but of God: whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same."[5] For if the power be on the side of the truth, and correct any one who was in error, he that is put right by the correction has praise from the power. If, on the other hand, the power be unfriendly to the truth, and cruelly persecute any one, he who is crowned victor in this contest receives praise from the power which he resists.

[1] Ps. l. 1. [2] Ps. lxxii. 8. [3] Dan. vi. 23, 24.
[4] Prov. xxvi. 27. [5] Rom. xiii. 1-3.

But you do not that which is good, so as to avoid being afraid of the power; unless perchance this is good, to sit and speak against not one brother,[1] but against all your brethren that are found among all nations, to whom the prophets, and Christ, and the apostles bear witness in the words of Scripture, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;"[2] and again, "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, a pure offering shall be offered unto My name; for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord."[3] Mark this: "saith the Lord;" not saith Donatus, or Rogatus, or Vincentius, or Ambrose, or Augustine, but "saith the Lord;" and again, "All tribes of the earth shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be His glorious name for ever, and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory: so let it be, so let it be."[4] And you sit at Cartennæ, and with a remnant of half a score of Rogatists you say, "Let it not be! Let it not be!"

21. You hear Christ speaking thus in the Gospel: "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."[5] You read also in the Acts of the Apostles how this gospel began at Jerusalem, where the Holy Spirit first filled those hundred and twenty persons, and went forth thence into Judæa and Samaria, and to all nations, as He had said unto them when He was about to ascend into heaven, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth;"[6] for "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."[7] And you contra-

[1] Ps. l. 20.
[2] Gen. xxvi. 4.
[3] Mal. i. 11.
[4] Ps. lxxii. 17-19.
[5] Luke xxiv. 44-47.
[6] Acts i. 15, 8, and ii.
[7] Ps. xix. 4; Rom. x. 18.

dict the Divine testimonies so firmly established and so clearly revealed, and attempt to bring about such an absolute confiscation of Christ's heritage, that although repentance is preached, as He said, in His name to all nations, whosoever may be in any part of the earth moved by that preaching, there is for him no possibility of remission of sins, unless he seek and discover Vincentius of Cartennæ, or some one of his nine or ten associates, in their obscurity in the imperial colony of Mauritania. What will the arrogance of insignificant mortals[1] not dare to do? To what extremities will the presumption of flesh and blood not hurry men? Is this your well-doing, on account of which you are not afraid of the power? You place this grievous stumbling-block in the way of your own mother's son,[2] for whom Christ died,[3] and who is yet in feeble infancy, not ready to use strong meat, but requiring to be nursed on a mother's milk;[4] and you quote against me the works of Hilary, in order that you may deny the fact of the Church's increase among all nations, even unto the end of the world, according to the promise which God, in order to subdue your unbelief, confirmed with an oath! And although you would by all means be most miserable if you stood against this when it was promised, you even now contradict it when the promise is fulfilled.

CHAP. VII. 22. You, however, through your profound erudition, have discovered something which you think worthy to be alleged as a great objection against the Divine testimonies. For you say, "If we consider the parts comprehended in the whole world, it is a comparatively small portion in which the Christian faith is known:" either refusing to see, or pretending not to know, to how many barbarous nations the gospel has already penetrated, within a space of time so short, that not even Christ's enemies can doubt that in a little while that shall be accomplished which our Lord foretold, when, answering the question of His disciples concerning the end of the world, He said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come."[5] Meanwhile do all you can to pro-

[1] Typhus morticinæ pelliculæ. [2] Ps. l. 20. [3] 1 Cor. viii. 11.
[4] 1 Cor. iii. 2. [5] Matt. xxiv. 14.

claim and to maintain, that even though the gospel be published in Persia and India, as indeed it has been for a long time, no one who hears it can be in any degree cleansed from his sins, unless he come to Cartennæ, or to the neighbourhood of Cartennæ! If you have not expressly said this, it is evidently through fear lest men should laugh at you; and yet when you do say this, do you refuse that men should weep for you?

23. You think that you make a very acute remark when you affirm the name Catholic to mean universal, not in respect to the communion as embracing the whole world, but in respect to the observance of all Divine precepts and of all the sacraments, as if we (even accepting the position that the Church is called Catholic because it honestly holds the whole truth, of which fragments here and there are found in some heresies) rested upon the testimony of this word's signification, and not upon the promises of God, and so many indisputable testimonies of the truth itself, our demonstration of the existence of the Church of God in all nations. In fact, however, this is the whole which you attempt to make us believe, that the Rogatists alone remain worthy of the name Catholics, on the ground of their observing all the Divine precepts and all the sacraments; and that you are the only persons in whom the Son of man when He cometh shall find faith.[1] You must excuse me for saying we do not believe a word of this. For although, in order to make it possible for that faith to be found in you which the Lord said that He would not find on the earth, you may perhaps presume even to say that you are to be regarded as in heaven, not on earth, we at least have profited by the apostle's warning, wherein he has taught us that even an angel from heaven must be regarded as accursed if he were to preach to us any other gospel than that which we have received.[2] But how can we be sure that we have indisputable testimony to Christ in the Divine Word, if we do not accept as indisputable the testimony of the same Word to the Church? For as, however ingenious the complex subtleties which one may contrive against the simple truth, and however great the mist of artful fallacies with which he may obscure

[1] Luke xviii. 8. [2] Gal. i. 8.

it, any one who shall proclaim that Christ has not suffered, and has not risen from the dead on the third day, must be accursed—because we have learned in the truth of the gospel, "that it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day;"[1]—on the very same grounds must that man be accursed who shall proclaim that the Church is outside of[2] the communion which embraces all nations: for in the next words of the same passage we learn also that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;[3] and we are bound to hold firmly this rule, "If any preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."[4]

CHAP. VIII. 24. If, moreover, we do not listen to the claims of the entire sect of Donatists when they pretend to be the Church of Christ, seeing that they do not allege in proof of this anything from the Divine Books, how much less, I ask, are we called upon to listen to the Rogatists, who will not attempt to interpret in the interest of their party the words of Scripture: "Where Thou feedest, where Thou dost rest in the south"![5] For if by this the southern part of Africa is to be understood,—the district, namely, which is occupied by Donatists, because it is under a more burning portion of the heavens,—the Maximianists must excel all the rest of your party, as the flame of their schism broke forth in Byzantium[6] and in Tripoli. Let the Arzuges, if they please, dispute this point with them, and contest that to them more properly this text applies; but how shall the imperial province of Mauritania, lying rather to the west than to the south, since it refuses to be called Africa,—how shall it, I say, find in the word "the south"[7] a ground for boasting, I do not say against the world, but against even that sect of Donatus from which the sect of Rogatus, a very small fragment of that other and larger fragment, has been broken off? For what else is it than superlative impudence for one to interpret in his own favour any allegorical statements, unless he has also plain

[1] Luke xxiv. 46.
[2] Præter.
[3] Luke xxiv. 47.
[4] Gal. i. 9.
[5] Meridie; at noon, E. V. Cant. i. 7.
[6] Now Tunis.
[7] Meridie.

testimonies, by the light of which the obscure meaning of the former may be made manifest.

25. With how much greater force, moreover, may we say to you what we are accustomed to say to all the Donatists: If any can have good grounds (which indeed none can have) for separating themselves from the communion of the whole world, and calling their communion the Church of Christ, because of their having withdrawn warrantably from the communion of all nations,—how do you know that in the Christian society, which is spread so far and wide, there may not have been some in a very remote place, from which the fame of their righteousness could not reach you, who had already, before the date of your separation, separated themselves for some just cause from the communion of the whole world? How could the Church in that case be found in your sect, rather than in those who were separated before you? Thus it comes to pass, that so long as you are ignorant of this, you cannot make with certainty any claim: which is necessarily the portion of all who, in defending the cause of their party, appeal to their own testimony instead of the testimony of God. For you cannot say, If this had happened, it could not have escaped our knowledge; for, not going beyond Africa itself, you cannot tell, when the question is put to you, how many subdivisions of the party of Donatus have occurred: in connection with which we must especially bear in mind that in your view the smaller the number of those who separate themselves, the greater is the justice of their cause, and this paucity of numbers makes them undoubtedly more likely to remain unnoticed. Hence, also, you are by no means sure that there may not be some righteous persons, few in number, and therefore unknown, dwelling in some place far remote from the south of Africa, who, long before the party of Donatus had withdrawn their righteousness from fellowship with the unrighteousness of all other men, had, in their remote northern region, separated themselves in the same way for some most satisfactory reason, and now are, by a claim superior to yours, the Church of God, as the spiritual Zion which preceded all your sects in the matter of warrantable secession, and who interpret in their favour the words of the Psalm, "Mount

Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King,"[1] with much more reason than the party of Donatus interpret in their favour the words, "Where Thou feedest, where Thou dost rest in the south."[2]

26. You profess, nevertheless, to be afraid lest, when you are compelled by imperial edicts to consent to unity, the name of God be for a longer time blasphemed by the Jews and the heathen: as if the Jews were not aware how their own nation Israel, in the beginning of its history, wished to exterminate by war the two tribes and a half which had received possessions beyond Jordan, when they thought that these had separated themselves from the unity of their nation.[3] As to the Pagans, they may indeed with greater reason reproach us for the laws which Christian emperors have enacted against idolaters; and yet many of these have thereby been, and are now daily, turned from idols to the living and true God. In fact, however, both Jews and Pagans, if they thought the Christians to be as insignificant in number as you are,—who maintain, forsooth, that you alone are Christians,—would not condescend to say anything against us, but would never cease to treat us with ridicule and contempt. Are you not afraid lest the Jews should say to you, "If your handful of men be the Church of Christ, what becomes of the statement of your Apostle Paul, that your Church is described in the words, 'Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband;'[4] in which he plainly declares the multitude of Christians to surpass that of the Jewish Church?" Will you say to them, "We are the more righteous because our number is not large;" and do you expect them not to reply, "Whoever[5] you claim to be, you are not those of whom it is said, 'She that was desolate hath *many* children,' if you are reduced to so small a number"?

27. Perhaps you will quote against this the example of that righteous man, who along with his family was alone found worthy of deliverance when the flood came. Do you see then how far you still are from being righteous? Most assuredly

[1] Ps. xlviii. 2. [2] Cant. i. 7. [3] Josh. xxii. 9–12.
[4] Gal. iv. 27. [5] *Quoslibet* is obviously the true reading.

we do not affirm you to be righteous on the ground of this instance until your associates be reduced to seven, yourself being the eighth person: provided always, however, that no other has, as I was saying, anticipated the party of Donatus in snatching up that righteousness, by having, in some 'far distant' spot, withdrawn himself along with seven more, under pressure of some good reason, from communion with the whole world, and so saved himself from the flood by which it is overwhelmed. Seeing, therefore, that you do not know whether this may not have been done, and been as entirely unheard of by you as the name of Donatus is unheard of by many nations of Christians in remote countries, you are unable to say with certainty where the Church is to be found. For it must be in that place in which what you have now done may happen to have been at an earlier date done by others, if there could possibly be any just reason for your separating yourselves from the communion of the whole world.

CHAP. IX. 28. We, however, are certain that no one could ever have been warranted in separating himself from the communion of all nations, because every one of us looks for the marks of the Church not in his own righteousness, but in the Divine Scriptures, and beholds it actually in existence, according to the promises. For it is of the Church that it is said, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters;"[1] which could be called on the one hand "thorns" only by reason of the wickedness of their manners, and on the other hand "daughters" by reason of their participation in the same sacraments. Again, it is the Church which saith, "From the end of the earth have I cried unto Thee when my heart was overwhelmed;"[2] and in another Psalm, "Horror hath kept me back from[3] the wicked that forsake Thy law;" and, "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved."[4] It is the same which says to her Spouse: "Tell me where Thou feedest, where Thou dost rest at noon: for why should I be as one veiled beside the flocks of Thy companions?"[5] This is the same as is said in another place: "Make known to me Thy

[1] Cant. ii. 2.
[2] Ps. lxi. 2.
[3] In this and the other passages quoted, Augustine translates from the LXX.
[4] Ps. cxix. 53 and 158.
[5] Cant. i. 7.

right hand, and those who are in heart taught in wisdom;"[1] in whom, as they shine with light and glow with love, Thou dost rest as in noontide; lest perchance, like one veiled, that is, hidden and unknown, I should run, not to Thy flock, but to the flocks of Thy companions, *i.e.* of heretics, whom the bride here calls companions, just as He called the thorns[2] "daughters," because of common participation in the sacraments: of which persons it is elsewhere said: "Thou wast a man, mine equal, my guide, my acquaintance, who didst take sweet food together with me; we walked unto the house of God in company. Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell,"[3] like Dathan and Abiram, the authors of an impious schism.

29. It is to the Church also that the answer is given immediately after in the passage quoted above: "If thou know not thyself,[4] O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flocks,[5] and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."[6] Oh, matchless sweetness of the Bridegroom, who thus replied to her question: "If thou knowest not thyself," He says; as if He said, "Surely the city which is set upon a mountain cannot be hid;[7] and therefore, 'Thou art not as one veiled, that thou shouldst run to the flocks of my companions.' For I am the mountain established upon the top of the mountains, unto which all nations shall come.[8] 'If thou knowest not thyself,' by the knowledge which thou mayest gain, not in the words of false witnesses, but in the testimonies of My book; 'if thou knowest not thyself,' from such testimony as this concerning thee: 'Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more: for thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is His name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called.' 'If thou knowest

[1] Ps. xc. 12. [2] Cant. ii. 2. [3] Ps. lv. 14, 15. [4] Nisi cognoveris temetipsam. [5] Gregum. [6] Cant. i. 8. [7] Matt. v. 14. [8] Isa. ii. 2.

not thyself,' O thou fairest among women, from this which hath been said of thee, 'The King hath greatly desired thy beauty,' and 'instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes upon the earth:'[1] if, therefore, 'thou know not thyself,' go thy way forth: I do not cast thee forth, but 'go thy way forth,' that of thee it may be said, 'They went out from us, but they were not of us.'[2] 'Go thy way forth' by the footsteps of the flocks, not in My footsteps, but in the footsteps of the flocks; and not of the one flock, but of flocks divided and going astray. 'And feed thy kids,' not as Peter, to whom it is said, 'Feed My sheep;'[3] but, 'Feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents,' not beside the tent of the Shepherd, where there is 'one fold and one Shepherd.'"[4] But the Church knows herself, and thereby escapes from that lot which has befallen those who did not know themselves to be in her.

30. The same [Church] is spoken of, when, in regard to the fewness of her numbers as compared with the multitude of the wicked, it is said: "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."[5] And again, it is of the same Church that it is said with respect to the multitude of her members: "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore."[6] For the same Church of holy and good believers is both small if compared with the number of the wicked, which is greater, and large if considered by itself; "for the desolate hath more sons than she which hath an husband," and "many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God."[7] God, moreover, presents unto Himself a "numerous people, zealous of good works."[8] And in the Apocalypse, many thousands "which no man can number," from every tribe and tongue, are seen clothed in white robes, and with palms of victory.[9] It is the same Church which is occasionally obscured, and, as it were, beclouded by

[1] Ps. xlv. 11–16. [2] 1 John ii. 19. [3] John xxi. 17. [4] John x. 16.
[5] Matt. vii. 14. [6] Gen. xxii. 14. [7] Matt. viii. 11.
[8] Tit. ii. 14; περιούσιος being translated by Augustine "abundans," where our version has "peculiar." [9] Rev. vii. 9.

the multitude of offences, when sinners bend the bow that they may shoot under the darkened moon[1] at the upright in heart.[2] But even at such a time the Church shines in those who are most firm in their attachment to her. And if, in the Divine promise above quoted, any distinct application of its two clauses should be made, it is perhaps not without reason that the seed of Abraham was compared both to the "stars of heaven," and to "the sand which is by the sea-shore:" that by "the stars" may be understood those who, in number fewer, are more fixed and more brilliant; and that by "the sand on the sea-shore" may be understood that great multitude of weak and carnal persons within the Church, who at one time are seen at rest and free while the weather is calm, but are at another time covered and troubled under the waves of tribulation and temptation.

31. Now, such a troublous time was the time at which Hilary wrote in the passage which you have thought fit artfully to adduce against so many Divine testimonies, as if by it you could prove that the Church has perished from the earth.[3] You may just as well say that the numerous churches of Galatia had no existence at the time when the apostle wrote to them: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you," that, "having begun in the Spirit, ye are now made perfect in the flesh?"[4] For thus you would misrepresent that learned man, who (like the apostle) was sternly rebuking the slow of heart and the timid, for whom he was travailing in birth a second time, until Christ should be formed in them.[5] For who does not know that many persons of weak judgment were at that time deluded by ambiguous phrases, so that they thought that the Arians believed the same doctrines as they themselves held; and that others, through fear, had yielded and feigned consent, not walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, to whom you would have denied that forgiveness which, when they had been turned from their error,

[1] ἐν σκοτομήνῃ, LXX. [2] Ps. xi. 2.

[3] Vincentius had quoted from Hilary's work, *De Synodis adversum Arianos*, a sentence to the effect that, with the exception of a very small remnant, the ten provinces of Asia in which he was settled were truly ignorant of God.

[4] Gal. iii. 1, 3. [5] Gal. iv. 19.

was extended to them? But in refusing such pardon, you prove yourselves wholly ignorant of the word of God. For read what Paul has recorded concerning Peter,[1] and what Cyprian has expressed as his view on the ground of that statement, and do not blame the compassion of the Church, which does not scatter the members of Christ when they are gathered together, but labours to gather His scattered members into one. It is true that those who then stood most resolute, and were able to understand the treacherous phrases used by the heretics, were few in number when compared with the rest; but some of them it is to be remembered were then bravely enduring sentence of banishment, and others were hiding themselves for safety in all parts of the world. And thus the Church, which is increasing throughout all nations, has been preserved as the Lord's wheat, and shall be preserved unto the end, yea, until all nations, even the barbarous tribes, are within its embrace. For it is the Church which the Son of man has sown as good seed, and of which He has foretold that it should grow among the tares until the harvest. For the field is the world, and the harvest is the end of time.[2]

32. Hilary, therefore, either was rebuking not the wheat, but the tares, in those ten provinces of Asia, or was addressing himself to the wheat, because it was endangered through some unfaithfulness, and spoke as one who thought that the rebuke would be useful in proportion to the vehemence with which it was given. For the canonical Scriptures contain examples of the same manner of rebuke in which what is intended for some is spoken as if it applied to all. Thus the apostle, when he says to the Corinthians, "How say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?"[3] proves clearly that all of them were not such; but he bears witness that those who were such were not outside of their communion, but among them. And shortly after, lest those who were of a different opinion should be led astray by them, he gave this warning: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."[4] But when he says, "Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and

[1] Gal. ii. 11–21. [2] Matt. xiii. 24–39. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 12. [4] 1 Cor. xv. 33, 34.

divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"[1] he speaks as if it applied to all, and you see how grave a charge he makes. Wherefore, if it were not that we read in the same epistle, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift,"[2] we would think that all the Corinthians had been carnal and natural, not perceiving the things of the Spirit of God,[3] fond of strife, and full of envy, and "walking as men." In like manner it is said, on the one hand, "the whole world lieth in wickedness,"[4] because of the tares which are throughout the whole world; and, on the other hand, Christ "is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world,"[5] because of the wheat which is throughout the whole world.

33. The love of many, however, waxes cold because of offences, which abound increasingly the more that, within the communion of the sacraments of Christ, there are gathered to the glory of His name even those who are wicked, and who persist in the obstinacy of error; whose separation, however, as chaff from the wheat, is to be effected only in the final purging of the Lord's threshing-floor.[6] These do not destroy those who are the Lord's wheat—few, indeed, when compared with the others, but in themselves a great multitude; they do not destroy the elect of God, who are to be gathered at the end of the world from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other.[7] For it is from the elect that the cry comes, "Help, Lord! for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men;"[8] and it is of them that the Lord saith, "He that shall endure to the end (when iniquity shall abound), the same shall be saved."[9] Moreover, that the psalm quoted is the language not of one man, but of many, is shown by the following context: "Thou shalt keep us, O Lord; Thou shalt preserve us from this generation for ever."[10] On account of this abounding iniquity which the Lord foretold, it is said

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 3. [2] 1 Cor. i. 4-7. [3] 1 Cor. ii. 14. [4] 1 John v. 19.
[5] 1 John ii. 2. [6] Matt. iii. 12. [7] Matt. xxiv. 31. [8] Ps. xii. 1.
[9] Matt. xxiv. 12, 13. [10] Ps. xii. 7.

in another place: "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" This doubt expressed by Him who knoweth all things prefigured the doubts which in Him we entertain, when the Church, being often disappointed in many from whom much was expected, but who have proved very different from what they were supposed to be, is so alarmed in regard to her own members, that she is slow to believe good of any one. Nevertheless it would be wrong to cherish doubt that those whose faith He shall find on the earth are growing along with the tares throughout the whole field.

34. Therefore it is the same Church also which within the Lord's net is swimming along with the bad fishes, but is in heart and in life separated from them, and departs from them, that she may be presented to her Lord a "glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle."[1] But the actual visible separation she looks for only on the sea-shore, *i.e.* at the end of the world,—meanwhile correcting as many as she can, and bearing with those whom she cannot correct; but she does not abandon the unity of the good because of the wickedness of those whom she finds incorrigible.

CHAP. X. 35. Wherefore, my brother, refrain from gathering together against divine testimonies so many, so perspicuous, and so unchallenged, the calumnies which may be found in the writings of bishops either of our communion, as Hilary, or of the undivided Church itself in the age preceding the schism of Donatus, as Cyprian or Agrippinus;[2] because, in the first place, this class of writings must be, so far as authority is concerned, distinguished from the canon of Scripture. For they are not read by us as if a testimony brought forward from them was such that it would be unlawful to hold any different opinion, for it may be that the opinions which they held were different from those to which truth demands our assent. For we are amongst those who do not reject what has been taught us even by an apostle: "If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you; nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule,"[3]—in that way, namely, which Christ is; of which way

[1] Eph. v. 27.
[2] Agrippinus, successor of Cyprian in the see of Carthage.
[3] Phil. iii. 15, 16.

the Psalmist thus speaks: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us: that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations."[1]

36. In the next place, if you are charmed by the authority of that bishop and illustrious martyr St. Cyprian, which we indeed regard, as I have said, as quite distinct from the authority of canonical Scripture, why are you not charmed by such things in him as these: that he maintained with loyalty, and defended in debate, the unity of the Church in the world and in all nations; that he censured, as full of self-sufficiency and pride, those who wished to separate themselves as righteous from the Church, holding them up to ridicule for assuming to themselves that which the Lord did not concede even to apostles,—namely, the gathering of the tares before the harvest,—and for attempting to separate the chaff from the wheat, as if to them had been assigned the charge of removing the chaff and cleansing the threshing-floor; that he proved that no man can be stained with guilt by the sins of others, thus sweeping away the only ground alleged by the authors of schism for their separation; that in the very matter in regard to which he was of a different opinion from his colleagues, he did not decree that those who thought otherwise than he did should be condemned or excommunicated; that even in his letter to Jubaianus[2] (which was read for the first time in the Council,[3] the authority of which you are wont to plead in defence of the practice of rebaptizing), although he admits that in time past persons who had been baptized in other communions had been received into the Church without being a second time baptized, on which ground they were regarded by him as having had no baptism, nevertheless he considers the use and benefit of peace within the Church to be so great, that for its sake he holds that these persons (though in his judgment unbaptized) should not be excluded from office in the Church?

37. And by this you will very readily perceive (for I know the acuteness of your mind) that your cause is completely subverted and annihilated. For if, as you suppose, the

[1] Ps. lxvii. 1, 2. [2] See Clark's Ante-Nicene Library, vol. viii. p. 260.
[3] Held at Carthage, A.D. 256.

Church which had been spread abroad throughout the world perished through her admitting sinners to partake in her sacraments (and this is the ground alleged for your separation), it had wholly perished long before,—at the time, namely, when, as Cyprian says, men were admitted into it without baptism,—and thus Cyprian himself had no Church within which to be born; and if so, how much more must this have been the case with one who, like Donatus, the author of your schism, and the father of your sect, belonged to a later age! But if at that time, although persons were being admitted into the Church without baptism, the Church nevertheless remained in being, so as to give birth to Cyprian and afterwards to Donatus, it is manifest that the righteous are not defiled by the sins of other men when they participate with them in the sacraments. And thus you have no excuse by which you can wash away the guilt of the schism whereby you have gone forth from the unity of the Church; and in you is fulfilled that saying of Holy Writ: "There is a generation that esteem themselves right, and have not cleansed themselves from the guilt of their going forth."[1]

38. The man who, out of regard to the sameness of the sacraments, does not presume to insist on the second administration of baptism even to heretics, is not, by thus avoiding Cyprian's error, placed on a level with Cyprian in merit, any more than the man who does not insist upon the Gentiles conforming to Jewish ceremonies is thereby placed on a level in merit with the Apostle Peter. In Peter's case, however, the record not only of his halting, but also of his correction, is contained in the canonical Scriptures; whereas the statement that Cyprian entertained opinions at variance with those approved by the constitution and practice of the Church is found, not in canonical Scripture, but in his own writings, and in those of a Council; and although it is not found in the same records that he corrected that opinion, it is nevertheless by no means an unreasonable supposition that he did correct it, and that this fact may perhaps have been suppressed by those who were too much pleased with the error

[1] Prov. xxx. 12, ἴκγεγον καθὸν δίκαιον ἑαυτὸν κρίνει, τὴν δ' ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἀπένιψεν.

into which he fell, and were unwilling to lose the patronage of so great a name. At the same time, there are not wanting some who maintain that Cyprian never held the view ascribed to him, but that this was an unwarrantable forgery passed off by liars under his name. For it was impossible for the integrity and authenticity of the writings of any one bishop, however illustrious, to be secured and preserved as the canonical Scriptures are through translation into so many languages, and through the regular and continuous manner in which the Church has used them in public worship. Even in the face of this, some have been found forging many things under the names of the apostles. It is true, indeed, that they made such attempts in vain, because the text of canonical Scripture was so well attested, and so generally used and known; but this effort of an unholy boldness, which has not forborne to assail writings which are defended by the strength of such notoriety, has proved what it is capable of essaying against writings which are not established upon canonical authority.

39. We, however, do not deny that Cyprian held the views ascribed to him: first, because his style has a certain peculiarity of expression by which it may be recognised; and secondly, because in this case our cause rather than yours is proved victorious, and the pretext alleged for your schism—namely, that you might not be defiled by the sins of other men—is in the most simple manner exploded; since it is manifest from the letters of Cyprian that participation in the sacraments was allowed to sinful men, when those who, in your judgment (and as you will have it, in his judgment also), were unbaptized were as such admitted to the Church, and that nevertheless the Church did not perish, but remained in the dignity belonging to her nature as the Lord's wheat scattered throughout the world. And, therefore, if in your consternation you thus betake yourselves to Cyprian's authority as to a harbour of refuge, you see the rock against which your error dashes itself in this course; if, on the other hand, you do not venture to flee thither, you are wrecked without any struggle for escape.

40. Moreover, Cyprian either did not hold at all the

opinions which you ascribe to him, or did subsequently correct his mistake by the rule of truth, or covered this blemish, as we may call it, upon his otherwise spotless mind by the abundance of his love, in his most amply defending the unity of the Church growing throughout the whole world, and in his most stedfastly holding the bond of peace; for it is written, "Charity [love] covereth a multitude of sins."[1] To this was also added, that in him, as a most fruitful branch, the Father removed by the pruning-knife of suffering whatever may have remained in him requiring correction: "For every branch in me," saith the Lord, "that beareth fruit He purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit."[2] And whence this care of him, if not because, continuing as a branch in the far-spreading vine, he did not forsake the root of unity? "For though he gave his body to be burned, if he had not charity, it would profit him nothing."[3]

41. Attend now a little while to the letters of Cyprian, that you may see how he proves the man to be inexcusable who desires ostensibly on the ground of his own righteousness to withdraw himself from the unity of the Church (which God promised and has fulfilled in all nations), and that you may more clearly apprehend the truth of the text quoted by me shortly before: "There is a generation that esteem themselves righteous, and have not cleansed themselves from the guilt of their going forth." In a letter which he wrote to Antonianus[4] he discusses a matter very closely akin to that which we are now debating; but it is better for us to give his very words: "Some of our predecessors," he says, "in the episcopal office in this province were of opinion that the peace of the Church should not be given to fornicators, and finally closed the door of repentance against those who had been guilty of adultery. They did not, however, withdraw themselves from fellowship with their colleagues in the episcopate; nor did they rend asunder the unity of the Catholic Church, by such harshness and obstinate perseverance in their censure as to separate themselves from the Church because others granted while they themselves refused to adulterers the peace of the Church.

[1] 1 Pet. iv. 8. [2] John xv. 2. [3] 1 Cor. xiii. 3.
[4] Letter LI. 21. Clark's Translation, p. 145.

The bond of concord remaining unbroken, and the sacrament of the Church continuing undivided, each bishop arranges and orders his own conduct as one who shall give account of his procedure to his Lord." What say you to that, brother Vincentius? Surely you must see that this great man, this peace-loving bishop and dauntless martyr, made nothing more earnestly his care than to prevent the sundering of the bond of unity. You see him travailing in birth for the souls of men, not only that they might, when conceived, be born in Christ, but also that, when born, they might not perish through their being shaken out of their mother's bosom.

42. Now give attention, I pray you, further to this thing which he has mentioned in protesting against impious schismatics. If those who granted peace to adulterers, who repented of their sin, shared the guilt of adulterers, were those who did not so act defiled by fellowship with them as colleagues in office? If, again, it was a right thing, as truth asserts and the Church maintains, that peace should be given to adulterers who repented of their sin, those who utterly closed against adulterers the door of reconciliation through repentance were unquestionably guilty of impiety in refusing healing to the members of Christ, in taking away the keys of the Church from those who knocked for admission, and in opposing with heartless cruelty God's most compassionate forbearance, which permitted them to live in order that, repenting, they might be healed by the sacrifice of a contrite spirit and broken heart. Nevertheless this their heartless error and impiety did not defile the others, compassionate and peace-loving men, when these shared with them in the Christian sacraments, and tolerated them within the net of unity, until the time when, brought to the shore, they should be separated from each other; or if this error and impiety of others did defile them, then the Church was already at that time destroyed, and there was no Church to give Cyprian birth. But if, as is beyond question, the Church continued in existence, it is also beyond question that no man in the unity of Christ can be stained by the guilt of the sins of other men if he be not consenting to the deeds of the wicked, and thus defiled by actual participation in their crimes, but only, for the sake of

the fellowship of the good, tolerating the wicked, as the chaff which lies until the final purging of the Lord's threshing-floor. These things being so, where is the pretext for your schism? Are ye not an "evil generation, esteeming yourselves righteous, yet not washed from the guilt of your going forth" [from the Church]?

43. If, now, I were disposed to quote anything against you from the writings of Tychonius, a man of your communion, who has written rather in defence of the Church and against you than the reverse, in vain disowning the communion of African Christians as traditors (by which one thing Parmenianus silences him), what else can you say in reply than what Tychonius himself said of you as I have shortly before reminded you: "That which is according to our will is holy"?[1] For this Tychonius—a man, as I have said, of your communion—writes that a Council was held at Carthage[2] by two hundred and seventy of your bishops; in which Council, after seventy-five days of deliberation, all past decisions on the matter being set aside, a carefully revised resolution was published, to the effect that to those who were guilty of a heinous crime as traditors, the privilege of communion should be granted as to blameless persons, if they refused to be baptized. He says further, that Deuterius of Macriana, a bishop of your party, added to the Church a whole crowd of traditors, without making any distinction between them and others, making the unity of the Church open to these traditors, in accordance with the decree of the Council held by these two hundred and seventy of your bishops, and that after that transaction Donatus continued unbroken his communion with the said Deuterius, and not only with him, but also with all the Mauritanian bishops for forty years, who, according to the statement of Tychonius, admitted the traditors to communion without insisting on their being rebaptized, up to the time of the persecution made by Macarius.

44. You will say, "What has that Tychonius to do with me?" It is true that Tychonius is the man whom Parmenianus checked by his reply, and effectually warned not to write such things; but he did not refute the statements them-

[1] P. 407. [2] This Council at Carthage is not elsewhere mentioned.

selves, but, as I have said above, silenced him by this one thing, that while saying such things concerning the Church which is diffused throughout the world, and while admitting that the faults of other men within its unity cannot defile one who is innocent, he nevertheless withdrew himself from the contagion of communion with African Christians because of their being traditors, and was an adherent of the party of Donatus. Parmenianus, indeed, might have said that Tychonius had in all these things spoken falsely; but, as Tychonius himself observes, many were still living at that time by whom these things might be proved to be most unquestionably true and generally known.

45. Of these things, however, I say no more: maintain, if you choose, that Tychonius spoke falsely; I bring you back to Cyprian, the authority which you yourself have quoted. If, according to his writings, every one in the unity of the Church is defiled by the sins of other members, then the Church had utterly perished before Cyprian's time, and all possibility of Cyprian's own existence (as a member of the Church) is taken away. If, however, the very thought of this is impiety, and it be beyond question that the Church continued in being, it follows that no one is defiled by the guilt of the sins of other men within the Catholic unity; and in vain do you, "an evil generation," maintain that you are righteous, when you are "not washed from the guilt of your going forth."

CHAP. XI. 46. You will say, "Why then do you seek us? Why do you receive those whom you call heretics?" Mark how simple and short is my reply. We seek you because you are lost, that we may rejoice over you when found, as over you while lost we grieved. Again we call you heretics; but the name applies to you only up to the time of your being turned to the peace of the Catholic Church, and extricated from the errors by which you have been ensnared. For when you pass over to us, you entirely abandon the position you formerly occupied, so that, as heretics no longer, you pass over to us. You will say, "Then baptize me." I would, if you were not already baptized, or if you had received the baptism of Donatus, or of Rogatus only, and not of Christ. It is not the Christian sacraments, but the crime of schism, whi

makes you a heretic. The evil which has proceeded from yourself is not a reason for our denying the good that is permanent in you, but which you possess to your own harm if you have it not in that Church from which proceeds its power to do good. For from the Catholic Church are all the sacraments of the Lord, which you hold and administer in the same way as they were held and administered even before you went forth from her. The fact, however, that you are no longer in that Church from which proceeded the sacraments which you have, does not make it the less true that you still have them. We therefore do not change in you that wherein you are at one with ourselves, for in many things you are at one with us; and of such it is said, "For in many things they were with me:"[1] but we correct those things in which you are not with us, and we wish you to receive those things which you have not where you now are. You are at one with us in baptism, in creed, and in the other sacraments of the Lord. But in the spirit of unity and bond of peace, in a word, in the Catholic Church itself, you are not with us. If you receive these things, the others which you already have will then not begin to be yours, but begin to be of use to you. We do not therefore, as you think, receive your men of your party as still belonging to you, but in the act of receiving them we incorporate with ourselves those who forsake you that they may be received by us; and in order that they may belong to us, their first step is to renounce their connection with you. Nor do we compel into union with us those who industriously serve an error which we abhor; but our reason for wishing those men to be united to us is, that they may no longer be worthy of our abhorrence.

47. But you will say, "The Apostle Paul baptized after John."[2] Did he then baptize after a heretic? If you do presume to call that friend of the Bridegroom a heretic, and to say that he was not in the unity of the Church, I beg that you will put this in writing. But if you believe that it would be the height of folly to think or to say so, it remains for your own wisdom to resolve the question why the Apostle Paul baptized after John. For if he baptized after one who

[1] Ps. lv. 18, Septuagint. [2] Acts xix. 5.

was his equal, you ought all to baptize after one another. If after one who was greater than himself, you ought to baptize after Rogatus; if after one who was less than himself, Rogatus ought to have baptized after you those whom you, as a presbyter, had baptized. If, however, the baptism which is now administered is in all cases of equal value to those who receive it, however unequal in merit the persons may be by whom it is administered, because it is the baptism of Christ, not of those who administer the rite, I think you must already perceive that Paul administered the baptism of Christ to certain persons because they had received the baptism of John only, and not of Christ; for it is expressly called the baptism of John, as the Divine Scripture bears witness in many passages, and as the Lord Himself calls it, saying: "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?"[1] But the baptism which Peter administered was the baptism, not of Peter, but of Christ; that which Paul administered was the baptism, not of Paul, but of Christ; that which was administered by those who, in the apostle's time, preached Christ not sincerely, but of contention,[2] was not their own, but the baptism of Christ; and that which was administered by those who, in Cyprian's time, either by artful dishonesty obtained their possessions, or by usury, at exorbitant interest, increased them, was not their own baptism, but the baptism of Christ. And because it was of Christ, therefore, although there was very great disparity in the persons by whom it was administered, it was equally useful to those by whom it was received. For if the excellency of baptism in each case is according to the excellency of the person by whom one is baptized, it was wrong in the apostle to give thanks that he had baptized none of the Corinthians, but Crispus, and Gaius, and the house of Stephanas;[3] for the baptism of the converts in Corinth, if administered by himself, would have been so much more excellent as Paul himself was more excellent than other men. Lastly, when he says, "I have planted, and Apollos watered,"[4] he seems to intimate that he had preached the gospel, and that Apollos had baptized. Is Apollos better than John?

[1] Matt. xxi. 25.
[2] Phil. i. 15, 17.
[3] 1 Cor. i. 14.
[4] 1 Cor. iii. 6.

Why then did he, who baptized after John, not baptize after Apollos? Surely because, in the one case, the baptism, by whomsoever administered, was the baptism of Christ; and in the other case, by whomsoever administered, it was, although preparing the way for Christ, only the baptism of John.

48. It seems to you an odious thing to say that baptism was given to some after John had baptized them, and yet that baptism is not to be given to men after heretics have baptized them; but it may be said with equal justice to be an odious thing that baptism was given to some after John had baptized them, and yet that baptism is not to be given to men after intemperate persons have baptized them. I name this sin of intemperance rather than others, because those in whom it reigns are not able to hide it: and yet what man, even though he be blind, does not know how many addicted to this vice are to be found everywhere? And yet among the works of the flesh, of which it is said that they who do them shall not inherit the kingdom of God, the apostle places this in an enumeration in which heresies also are specified: "Now the works of the flesh," he says, "are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."[1] Baptism, therefore, although it was administered after John, is not administered after a heretic, on the very same principle according to which, though administered after John, it is not administered after an intemperate man: for both heresies and drunkenness are among the works which exclude those who do them from inheriting the kingdom of God. Does it not seem to you as if it were a thing intolerably unseemly, that although baptism was repeated after it had been administered by him who, not even moderately drinking wine, but wholly refraining from its use, prepared the way for the kingdom of God, and yet that it should not be repeated after being administered by an intemperate man, who shall not inherit the kingdom of God? What can be

[1] Gal. v. 19–21.

said in answer to this, but that the one was the baptism of John, after which the apostle administered the baptism of Christ; and that the other, administered by an intemperate man, was the baptism of Christ? Between John Baptist and an intemperate man there is a great difference, as of opposites; between the baptism of Christ and the baptism of John there is no contrariety, but a great difference. Between the apostle and an intemperate man there is a great difference; but there is none between the baptism of Christ administered by an apostle, and the baptism of Christ administered by an intemperate man. In like manner, between John and a heretic there is a great difference, as of opposites; and between the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ which a heretic administers there is no contrariety, but there is a great difference. But between the baptism of Christ which an apostle administers, and the baptism of Christ which a heretic administers, there is no difference. For the form of the sacrament is acknowledged to be the same even when there is a great difference in point of worth between the men by whom it is administered.

49. But pardon me, for I have made a mistake in wishing to convince you by arguing from the case of an intemperate man administering baptism; for I had forgotten that I am dealing with a Rogatist, not with one bearing the wider name of Donatist. For among your colleagues who are so few, and in the whole number of your clergy, perhaps you cannot find one addicted to this vice. For you are persons who hold that the name Catholic is given to the faith not because communion of those who hold it embraces the whole world, but because they observe the whole of the Divine precepts and the whole of the sacraments; you are the persons in whom alone the Son of man when He cometh shall find faith, when on the earth He shall find no faith, forasmuch as you are not earth and on the earth, but heavenly and dwelling in heaven! Do you not fear, or do you not observe that "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble"?[1] Does not that very passage in the Gospel startle you, in which the Lord saith, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith in the

[1] Jas. iv. 6.

earth?"[1] Immediately thereafter, as if foreseeing that some would proudly arrogate to themselves the possession of this faith, He spake to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, the parable of the two men who went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The words which follow I leave for yourself to consider and to answer. Nevertheless examine more minutely your small sect, to see whether not so much as one who administers baptism is an intemperate man. For so widespread is the havoc wrought among souls by this plague, that I am greatly surprised if it has not reached even your infinitesimal flock, although it is your boast that already, before the coming of Christ, the one good Shepherd, you have separated between the sheep and the goats.

CHAP. XII. 50. Listen to the testimony which through me is addressed to you by those who are the Lord's wheat, suffering meanwhile until the final winnowing,[2] among the chaff in the Lord's threshing-floor, *i.e.* throughout the whole world, because "God hath called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof,"[3] and throughout the same wide field the "children praise Him."[4] We disapprove of every one who, taking advantage of this imperial edict, persecutes you, not with loving concern for your correction, but with the malice of an enemy. Moreover, although, since every earthly possession can be rightly retained only on the ground either of divine right, according to which all things belong to the righteous, or of human right, which is in the jurisdiction of the kings of the earth, you are mistaken in calling those things yours which you do not possess as righteous persons, and which you have forfeited by the laws of earthly sovereigns, and plead in vain, "We have laboured to gather them," seeing that you may read what is written, "The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just;"[5] nevertheless we disapprove of any one who, availing himself of this law which the kings of the earth, doing homage to Christ, have published in order to correct your impiety, covetously seeks to possess himself of your property. Also we disapprove of any one who, on the ground

[1] Luke xviii. 8. [2] Matt. iii. 12. [3] Ps. l. 1.
[4] Ps. cxiii. 1–3. [5] Prov. xiii. 22.

not of justice, but of avarice, seizes and retains the provision pertaining to the poor, or the chapels[1] in which you meet for worship, which you once occupied in the name of the Church, and which are by all means the rightful property only of that Church which is the true Church of Christ. We disapprove of any one who receives a person that has been expelled by you for some disgraceful action or crime, on the same terms on which those are received who have lived among you chargeable with no other crime beyond the error through which you are separated from us. But these are things which you cannot easily prove; and although you can prove them, we bear with some whom we are unable to correct or even to punish; and we do not quit the Lord's threshing-floor because of the chaff which is there, nor break the Lord's net because of bad fishes enclosed therein, nor desert the Lord's flock because of goats which are to be in the end separated from it, nor go forth from the Lord's house because in it there are vessels destined to dishonour.

CHAP. XIII. 51. But, my brother, if you forbear seeking the empty honour which comes from men, and despise the reproach of fools, who will be ready to say, "Why do you now destroy what you once laboured to build up?" it seems to me to be beyond doubt that you will now pass over to the Church which I perceive that you acknowledge to be the true Church: the proofs of which sentiment on your part I find at hand. For in the beginning of your letter which I am now answering you have these words: "I knew you, my excellent friend, as a man devoted to peace and uprightness, when you were still far removed from the Christian faith, and were in these earlier days occupied with literary pursuits; but since your conversion at a more recent time to the Christian faith, you give your time and labour, as I am informed by the statements of many persons, to theological controversies."[2] These words are undoubtedly your own, if you were the person who sent me that letter. Seeing, therefore, that you confess that I have been converted to the Christian faith, although I have not been converted to the sect of the Donatists or of the Rogatists, you unquestionably uphold the truth that beyond the pale of

[1] Basilicæ. [2] Disputationibus legalibus.

Rogatists and Donatists the Christian faith exists. This faith therefore is, as we say, spread abroad throughout all nations, which are according to God's testimony blessed in the seed of Abraham.[1] Why therefore do you still hesitate to adopt what you perceive to be true, unless it be that you are humbled because at some former time you did not perceive what you now see, or maintained some different view, and so, while ashamed to correct an error, are not ashamed (where shame would be much more reasonable) of remaining wilfully in error?

52. Such conduct the Scripture has not passed over in silence; for we read, "There is a shame which bringeth sin, and there is a shame which is graceful and glorious."[2] Shame brings sin, when through its influence any one forbears from changing a wicked opinion, lest he be supposed to be fickle, or be held as by his own judgment convicted of having been long in error: such persons descend into the pit alive, that is, conscious of their perdition; whose future doom the death of Dathan and Abiram and Korah, swallowed up by the opening earth, long ago prefigured.[3] But shame is graceful and glorious when one blushes for his own sin, and by repentance is changed to something better, which you are reluctant to do because overpowered by that false and fatal shame, fearing lest by men who know not whereof they affirm, that sentence of the apostle may be quoted against you: "If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor."[4] If, however, this sentence admitted of application to those who, after being corrected, preach the truth which in their perversity they opposed, it might have been said at first against Paul himself, in regard to whom the churches of Christ glorified God when they heard that he now "preached the faith which once he destroyed."[5]

53. Do not, however, imagine that one can pass from error to truth, or from any sin, be it great or small, to the correction of his sin, without giving some proof of his repentance. It is, however, an error of intolerable impertinence for men to blame the Church, which is proved by so many Divine testimonies to

[1] Gen. xxii. 18. [2] Ecclus. iv. 21. [3] Num. xvi. 31–33.
[4] Gal. ii. 18. [5] Gal. i. 23, 24.

be the Church of Christ, for dealing in one way with those who forsake her, receiving them back on condition of correcting this fault by some acknowledgment of their repentance, and in another way with those who never were within her pale, and are receiving welcome to her peace for the first time; her method being to humble the former more fully, and to receive the latter upon easier terms, cherishing affection for both, and ministering with a mother's love to the health of both.

You have here perhaps a longer letter than you desired. It would have been much shorter if in my reply I had been thinking of you alone; but as it is, even though it should be of no use to yourself, I do not think that it can fail to be of use to those who shall take pains to read it in the fear of God, and without respect of persons. Amen.

END OF VOL. I.

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